

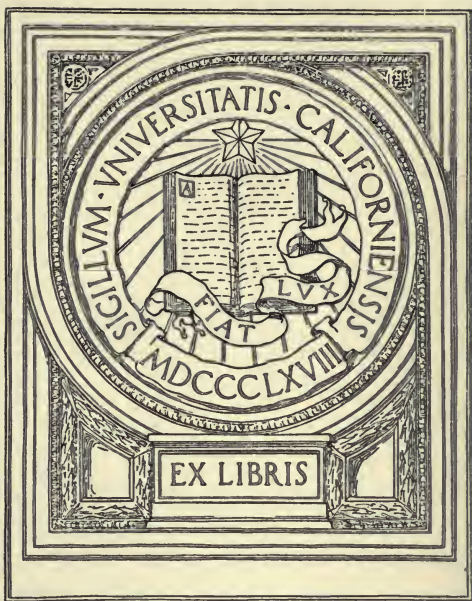
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YONNONDIO,

OR

WARRIORS OF THE GENESEE:



TALE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

BY

WM. H. C. HOSMER.

//

"From valley broad and mountain's brow.
Gone are the Aganuschion now."

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SONNET DEDICATORY.

Thou hast been, sire, my guardian and my guide,
And therefore it is meet that unto thee
The few stray leaves should dedicated be
Which I commit to Fortune's changeful tide :
Thy voice aroused me from desponding mood,
When pale with letter'd toil, as trumpet blast,
Heard in the watch of midnight, sendeth blood
Through veins of startled warrior warm and fast.
In Europe's *worn-out world* I have not sought
Heroic theme, but in my native vale,
Moved by the red man's legendary tale,
Perchance from Nature's altar-flame have caught
One kindling spark—and, Father, if my strain
Win word of praise from thee, I have not sung in vain.

PREFACE.

A friend, on hearing that "*Yonnondio*" was in press, remarked that it would appear at an unpropitious hour.

The clamor of contending parties in a great political contest, I am aware, is well calculated to drown the low *undertone* of a poet's lute; but the same cause, by distracting the attention of criticism, may render the voice of censure less harsh and loud.

The Poem is descriptive of events that transpired in the valley of the Genesee, during the summer and autumn of 1687—of the memorable attempt of the Marquis De Nonville, under pretext of preventing an interruption of the French trade, to plant the standard of Louis XIV. in the beautiful country of the Senecas.

Impartial history has convicted the Marquis of an open infraction of the treaty made at Whitehall, in the previous year, between Great Britain and France, by which it was settled that the Indian trade in America should remain free to both crowns.

The Five Nations were in alliance with the former, and English parties were cut off on the Lakes, their

effects seized, and their persons imprisoned, previous to any hostile demonstration on the part of the Senecas.

I shall not apologize to my readers for clothing a stable frame-work of fact with the shifting drapery of fancy—it is the bard's prerogative by immemorial usage; nor will I advert to hero and heroines, summoned from “Dream Land” further than to say that in *Blanche* I have endeavored to portray a *true-hearted* woman strong and faithful in her love, and sustained in the hour of trial by a firm reliance on Heaven.

D'Lisle, I will admit, is not a fair representative of that famous *Order* who pioneered the way on this continent, for the march of civilization. Many of Loyola's followers were the messengers of peace and good will to man, though their subtle and dissembling policy was ever to make political proselytes through the agency of religion.

In conclusion, let me add, that I have essayed to throw the mantle of Romance over the pleasant scenes of my boyhood; and if my failure has been signal, the most censorious must admit that the design is worthy of commendation.

AVON, Aug. 24, 1844.

P R O E M.

Realm of the Senecas ! no more
In shadow lies the Pleasant Vale ;
Gone are the Chiefs who ruled of yore,
Like chaff before the rushing gale.
Their rivers run with narrowed bounds,
Cleared are their broad, old hunting grounds,
And on their ancient battle fields
The greensward to the ploughman yields ;
Like mocking echoes of the hill
Their fame resounded and grew still,
And on green ridge and level plain
Their hearths will never smoke again.
When fade away the summer flowers,
And come the bright autumnal hours,
The ripened grain above their graves
Nods to the wind in golden waves.
Fled are their pomp and power like dreams,
By scribe unmarked, by bard unsung ;
But mountains, lakes and rolling streams

Recall their wild rich forest tongue,
And names of melody they bear,
Sweeter than flute-notes on the air.

Oblivion swallows, one by one,
Old legends by the sire to son
 Around the crackling camp-fire told—
Their oaks have fallen, trunk and bough,
And hut and hall of council now
 Are changed to ashes cold.
Toiled have I many a weary day
To gather their traditions grey,
And rescue from effacing time
A few brave deeds and traits sublime.
Now listen, for the tale I tell
Perchance may be remembered well,
Though coarsely framed my sylvan lyre,
Harsh its wild tone, untuned its wire!

YONNONDIO.

CANTO FIRST.

THE CAMP.

Lovely is Summer in old Mother Land,
Lighting up garden, park and pasture green ;
Wrecks of monastic pomp, and castle grand,
Forever hallowed features of the scene !
But lovelier look the nymph puts on, I ween,
Amid lone forests of the Western World,
Though brown of visage and untamed of mien—
Moss-fringed her robe—her ringlets all uncurled
With dew in leafy halls, at noontide hour impearled.

Oak groves of merry England are renowned
In rustic legend and in polished lay ;
Mort on the horn her early monarchs wound,
While bled the stag, beneath their branches gray,
And still their iron trunks defy decay—
But rugged woods of our Hesperian clime

Have wider empire :—clothed in dark array
That graced their arches at the birth of Time,
When new-born spheres, with song, began their march
sublime.

I.

Through pines that crowned the wooded steep,
Winds, freshened by the lake were sighing,
And in his basin, broad and deep,
Irondequoit was darkly lying.
A deeper, more luxuriant green,
In grassy spire and wood-plant seen ;
A clearer tinkle in the rill,
And light more lustrous on the hill,
A richer fragrance in the breeze,
And wilder, sweeter melodies,
Told that serene and happy May
To summer had resigned her sway ;
That arching sky had caught its hue
From June's clear orb of radiant blue.

II.

Earth was in gala dress arrayed,
And blushed with flowers the forest mould,
While stately tulip trees displayed
Their honied cups of glistening gold ;

Rich robe was over maple flung ;
On chestnut golden tassel hung ;
Light airs a slumberous tune evoked
From leaves that trembling poplar cloaked,
And oaks a thicker foliage bore,
To canopy the forest floor ;
Where open space on hill side lay,
Exposed to ripening warmth of day,
The sod, with strawberries bestrown,
Was tinted like the ruby-stone.

III.

Far up the reedy bay were seen
Bright upland swells with vales between,
Through which ran brooks of crystal sheen ;
The lily-stem its silver cup
Above the water lifted up,
And throwing on deep pool a shade,
Waved the long flag its emerald blade ;
To crumbling marge, with eager cries,
The heron bore his dripping prize,
And down the rough uneven bank
The snorting wild deer came and drank ;
Amid the reeds that fringed the shore
The water-rat and otter swam,
And fearlessly the beaver bore
His tooth-hewn timber to the dam.
Wild was the scene !—his ragged cone,

Old mossy hemlock reared on high,
The forest eagle's lofty throne
When tired of circling in the sky.
The mock-bird, perched on bending spray,
Woke his sweet, imitative lay ;
With arching neck and air of pride,
The white swan floated on the tide ;
And gabbling in sequestered cove,
The black duck oiled her breast, and dove.

IV.

East of Irondequoit the scene
Was rich in robes of living green,
But ruder charm romantic gaze
Found on the Western shore to praise ;
For the huge monarchs of the wood
In straggling groups disparted stood,
As if they did not wish to break
The broad blue prospect of the Lake,
Their *playmate* when the rugged earth
Gave stem and leaf a hardy birth ;
Whose bath of cool, refreshing spray
Had wet them many a summer day ;
Whose surge kept time upon the shore
When night-blast woke their branches hoar,
In concert with the hollow roar.
On naked point of table-land
That, beetling o'er the polished strand,

Commanded view of wave and wood
Two natives of the region stood ;
And crouching fondly at their feet
Gaunt wolf dogs panted with the heat.

v.

Knives in their braided girdles hung,
To which the purple stain yet clung,
And pouches grim with dangling claws,
Bead-broidered tail and grinning jaws.
Rude jewels in the shape of globes,
And rings depended from their ears,
Slit lengthwise to the pliant lobes ;
And twinkled like resplendent tears
That morning finds upon the leaf,
Drops from the urn of joy, not grief.
Thongs to the graceful limbs made fast,
 The scarlet leggin laced with quills,
By bird and bristling hedge-hog cast,
 And edged with long and gaudy frills.
Adorned with feathers brightly dyed,
 And ornaments of bone and shell ;
Trim hunting frock of smoke-tann'd hide
 Their manly forms befitted well.
Light hoofs of deer on sinew strung
 Were closely to the ancle bound,
And when the foot was lifted, rung
With a low, strange and rattling sound ;

Their rounded heads were shorn and bare,
Save cherished tufts of streaming hair,
Left for the grasp of mortal foe,
If *destiny* should aid his blow
When meet wild warriors of the wood
To quench Hate's ghastly torch in blood.
Bard would have said with kindling brain,
Could he have gazed upon the twain,
"Behold, reposing from the chase,
The guardian spirits of the place,
And study for inspired hour
When bosom thrills with sense of power;"
Would sculptor in their forms have found,
Full of wild energy and grace,
And the marked features of their race
By Nature's brush embrowned.

VI.

Tone, dignity of step and mien,
Apart from flaunting pomp of dress,
In courtly hall and forest green,
Denote high birth and kingliness :
Brow, lip and haughty glance betray
A personage of kingly sway,
Though no dread symbol of command
Is flashing in the jewelled hand ;
And persons of monarchical mould
Were those dark hunters of the wold ;

And likeness to each other bore
Observable to careless eye,
Not only in the garb they wore,
But bearing resolute and high.

VII.

The senior of the two was tall,
But in his frame symmetrical,
And chronicled were former wars
On brow and breast in "glorious scars."
Though seventy vanished years to white
Had scalp lock changed once black as night,
Still could his eye direct the shaft,

His hand the whirling hatchet guide,
Or knife-blade redden to the haft,

When close encounter prowess tried.
Hours lapsed away, and neither broke
The silence of the place, or spoke,
But stood in attitude to hear
Sounds only caught by *tutored* ear,
While looked they forth with searching glance
On Cadaracqui's calm expanse,
For floating on his bosom blue
Large objects slowly loomed to view.

VIII.

At last the younger woodman cried,
For weapon feeling at his side,

“Look, Father!—gleaming in the sun,
Are pointed spear, long knife and gun,
While hither, on the swelling waves,
Float Yonnondio’s hostile braves!”

“Yes, boy!—those war-canoes are mann’d
By foemen to our native land;
They hope to wrap our huts in flame,
And blot from memory our name;
My people unprepared assail,
Change the light laugh to dying wail,
And flowers tread down that fragrance shed
On grave-mounds of our honored dead.

I fear them not!—three moons ago
My warriors laid their bravest low,
And gory scalps, on homeward track,
To shrivel in the smoke bore back.

Look, look! a viler race is near—
The coward Hurons guide them here,
And fondly hope, in lucky hour,
To crush the *Aganuschion* power:
But will they find a dreaming foe?
No, thanks to Ou-we-nee-you,* no!

When hunters for the panther search

They never find their game asleep,
But watchful on his lofty perch,
And crouching for the deadly leap.

* Great Spirit.

IX.

Their dangerous post those warriors kept,
Until they heard the splash of oar,
While heavily the blade was swept,
Affrighting wild fowl on the shore;
Then the loud, startling war-whoop raised,
One moment on the pageant gazed,
And sought, with footstep quick and light,
Screen in thick wilderness from sight.

X.

The proud flotilla in the bay
Cast anchor near the close of day,
Scaring the wild-wolf, grim and gaunt,
From old, hereditary haunt,
And startling in his mossy lair,
With iron clang of arms, the bear.
The sun descending, bathed in light,
Steep, naked bluff and pine-capped height,
And varied tints of lustrous glow
Flung on the lucent waves below,
That kissed, by gentle south wind fann'd,
With murmur soft the glittering strand.

XI.

It would have been a thrilling sight
Troops to have seen in trappings bright—

Whose guns had poured the leaden rain
On storied fields across the main,
And heard the trumpet's martial call
Sound triumph-note for brave old Gaul,
By hundreds landed on a shore
Where sabre never rang before—
By leaders who had freely bled
In wars of mighty Louis, led—
Chiefs who on Steenkirk's plain had fought,
And battle's heart at Landen sought.

XII.

De Nonville with an eye of skill
Took measurement of slope and hill,
And tents were pitched, by his command,
On swells of undulating land,
Well guarded on the weaker flanks,
By water and opposing banks;
While open front, or esplanade,
Was wisely left for prompt parade,
If chance the tocsin of alarm
Should call upon the host "to arm!"
The pickets, helmeted and mailed,
For nightly vigil were detailed;
The sentinel was shown the bounds,
Wherein to pace his lonely rounds,
And in advance, the tried vidette,
To guard each pass to camp, was set.

XIII.

Their savage allies plumed for strife,
And armed with hatchet, club and knife,
In dusky groups, beneath the shade,
Their sylvan lodge and watch-fire made,
Or ranged the copse with ready bow,
To spy out trace of lurking foe ;
For the fierce Huron of Lorette,
And stern Algonquin of the north,
Whose soil the Seneca had wet

With blood and tears, were going forth
To crush the conqueror, and leave
No mourner for the slain to grieve,
If *vengeance* could the task achieve.

XIV.

Nose, ear and neck, with jewels hung,
And wild words of their forest tongue ;
Rude quivers on the shoulder borne,
From spotted fawn and wild-cat torn ;
The gleaming cincture round the waist,
Prized ornament of savage taste ;
Paint on their scowling faces spread,
In horrid streaks of black and red—
Their bucklers of defensive form,
Frail guardians in the battle storm,

Bore strange unlikeness to the dress,
Bright armor, martial haughtiness,
And discipline of soldiers, famed
Whenever "warrior" is named :
Whose charge had strewn the earth with dead
While Luxemburgh and Vauban led,
Or in the combat, man to man,
Had seen with hardihood unshrinking
The plume of Conde in the van,
Where Death his *reddest draught* was drinking.

XV.

Tribes, who with Yonnondio came
Hereditary wrongs to right,
Abandoning pursuit of game
For issues of the doubtful fight,
Were under conduct of D'Lisle,
A man of energy and wile ;
And priest of that strange order known
From clime to clime, and zone to zone—
Whose pilgrims in the world of thought
The secret springs of knowledge sought,
And deemed it feminine to dwell,
Monastic drones, in convent cell :
Whose members, by ambition fired,
Forged fetters of religious thrall,
And tyranny o'er minds acquired
In savage hut and lordly hall :

Braved, to extend their mystic league,
Dark peril, hunger and fatigue,
Upraised the rod of mystic sway
In distant Ind and Paragua,
Sought with the vesper hymn and psalm
Saint Lawrence and his isles of balm—
Made voluble the wooing air,
Round holy Horicon with prayer,
Nor scrupled with the cross and sword,
To head a wild, barbaric horde.

XVI.

D'Lisle made use of subtle arts
To graft his creed on savage hearts,
And won, by gift and gilded bribe,
Esteem of many a forest tribe.
Like them, he painted face and lip,
And robed his limbs in skin of beast,
And sate, in joyous fellowship,
With quivered warriors at the feast;
Dark, floating Rumor linked his name,
Among his countrymen, with shame—
Some even whispered that he fled
In terror from his native clime,
And bore a keen stiletto, red
From point to hilt with crime;
And many hinted that his soul
Was far too proud for priestly stole,

And that his broad and iron hand
Could better clutch the heavy brand,
Than grasp with meek, uplifted eye,
The sacred vase or rosary.

XVII.

Night with her sombre shadows came,
And on the waters dark and still,
Was flung the ruddy light of flame,
By beacon kindled on the hill;
The muffled owl, foreboding bird,
Complaining on her perch was heard;
The wild beast caught the scent of men,
And hurried to his brambly den;
The whippoorwill beguiled the hours .
With tender lay in leafy bowers,
Rejoicing that the time of dew
Had blotted out the sunset hues,
While stars, in absence of the sun,
Shot forth in beauty, one by one,
And bathed in rich, romantic sheen,
The tops of pine and hemlock green,
And gave a soft, transparent glow,
To slumbering Ontario.

XVIII.

The sentry on his lonely post
Moved to and fro with iron tramp ;

And the loud tumult of the host
Grew fainter in the guarded camp ;
The wearied conscript, young in years,
Torn from his native vale with tears
To mingle in the war-array,
From home and hearth-stone far away,
In dreams of his paternal cot
The miseries of life forgot :
Heard the glad vintagers again
Chant gaily some old peasant strain,
While gleaning clusters from the vine,
Or pressing out the crimson wine.
Once more, in visions of repose,
The distant village spire arose,
And on his ear with soothing, fell
The monotone of evening bell.
Again he tried his vaunted speed
With jocund brothers, on the mead,
And marked his sister, young and fair,
Plait garlands for her flowing hair—
Met that devoted maid once more,
 Who wildly wept from him to sever,
And by the *Star of Lovers* swore
 To prove unfaithful never.
Once more the smiling dreamer heard
That *being* breathe familiar word,
Who watched his infancy, and made
 A pillow of her breast for him ;

And thought her care would be repaid,
By fond caress and filial aid,

When her mild eye grew dim.
Beneath his own unclouded skies,
Scenes of historic glory spread,
And back came early memories

Like phantoms of the dead—
The huge chateau of other days,
Proud object of his childish gaze,
Uplifted as in former hours
Its moss-grown battlements and towers ;
And entering deserted halls
Through fissures in the leaning walls,
The wild winds sang in hollow tone
Of *valor* fled, and *beauty* gone.

XIX.

Extended, too, on couch of earth
The veteran of proven worth,
A fleeting visit paid in sleep
To kindred o'er the tossing deep.
Nigh graves, wherein his fathers slept,
The Loire in silver windings swept,
And gladly he beheld once more
The hamlet where they dwelt of yore.
The blood ran quicker through his frame,
When loved ones shouted out his name,
And that poor wife, who pining long

Breathed snatches oft of mournful song,
And nightly prayed, on bended knee,
That God would stretch protecting arm,
And guard by land, or whelming sea,
Her absent mate from harm—
Right toward him came on flying feet,
Her wedded lord once more to greet,
While chubby lads, in gay attire,
Laughed welcome to their war-worn sire.

XX.

While thus the dreaming soldier lay,
Rude pillow of his knapsack making,
Regardless that the coming day
Might bring repose that knows no waking,
Paced hurriedly within his tent,
A chieftain of the armament,
Erect he moved, though on his head
The frost of sixty years was spread,
And well his martial dress became
The fine proportions of his frame.
His helm and corslet, soiled and worn,
The brunt of many frays had borne ;
And blazing badge upon his breast,
His knighthood and his rank expressed.
No pleasant vision of delight
To lull *his* soul, was brought by night,
And slumber o'er him waved in vain

The wand of her quiescent reign.
His brow contracted to a frown,
Blanched cheek and gloomy eye cast down,
Unerringly bespoke a man
Whose thoughts in gloomy currents ran—
Who vengefully had brooded long
O'er deep and unforgiven wrong,
With heart corroded to its core
By bitter memories of yore.
At last a sudden pause he made,
And hand upon his dagger laid ;
For indistinctly on his ear
Came the low sound of footstep near—
Then from the hilt his hand withdrew,
As the dark form of one he knew
Strode through an opening in the tent ;
And on his visitant he bent
A searching, anxious glance, and cried—
“ What tidings, father, of my child ?
Speak, for my brain is waxing wild ! ”
“ *She lives !* ” the Jesuit replied.
“ And her betrayer ? ” “ Soon will feel
The temper of avenging steel.”
“ Where lurks the fiend of perjured soul,
Who came in human guise and stole
The young and last surviving flower
That grew in my domestic bower ?
Left on my honorable name

The mildew of eternal shame,
Then made my fond, old heart the tomb
Of bliss and expectation fair,
And peopled its sepulchral gloom
With tiger passions and despair."

XXI.

The maid and her seducer dwell
With that fierce tribe we wish to quell ;
I wrung the tidings from a foe
Caught near our lines an hour ago ;
For well I speak and understand
The dialect of this wild land,
And oft have borne the cross among
The natives of this valley bright,
And won by soft, persuasive tongue
Full many a tawny proselyte.
Though words of vengeance you may deem
Unsuited to my calling meek ;
That holy types but ill beseem
The glow of hatred on my cheek ;
You will not marvel when you hear
The tale I breathe into your ear,
That memories of hoarded wrong
Within my bosom also throng—
Wrong that the blood of cursed DeGrai
Alone can heal or wash away.
The hunter following the stag,

May faint with weariness, and lag—
The dove in airy speed may balk
Her swooping enemy the hawk—
The timid lamb may shelter find,
When the gaunt night-wolf howls behind—
The bandit may his cavern gain,
While baffled huntsmen search in vain;
But never yet did foe escape,
When foot of mine was on his track,
Though peril, in appalling shape,
Stood in the path to warn me back.

XXII.

I know your ancient castle well,
That overlooks the blue Moselle,
And envied, when a puny boy,
The wealth and titles of Le Troye;
For though my rude and peasant sires
Were humble servitors of thine,
Ambition never kindled fires
Within a prouder heart than mine.
Oft, oft in dreams of high renown,
While sitting by the rustic hearth,
My soul would for a season drown
Desponding thought of lowly birth,
But memory her eye would ope,
And crush the radiant flowers of Hope,
Convert my fabrics, frail and fair,

To empty, unsubstantial air.
Long nights of toil, and weary days,
I strove to win scholastic bays,
A miner in the well of Truth,
Unmindful of the sports of youth ;
But lacking patronage and gold,
The fervor of my brain grew cold.
In after years when Gaul awoke,
 And urged her nobles to the field,
A gleam upon the darkness broke,
 And gory paths to fame revealed.
O'er musty books of ancient lore
My mounting spirit loved to pore
In monkish idleness no more :
I heard the warning bugle blow,
And saw the greeting winds untwine
The banner of your ancient line,
And liegemen to the muster go,
With pulses panting for the foe ;
Then buckling on a rusted blade,
Went, like my sires, your House to aid.

XXIII.

Sir Knight, at times bethink you not
Of that young soldier of your corps,
Who on the field of Cassel fought,
And through a storm of fire and shot
 The tattered colors bore,

Snatched by his daring from the plain
When the bold bannerman was slain ?
“Hah, by the saints, said old Le Troye,
“Your voice reminds me of that boy—
“Is not your true address, Mordaunt?”
No! but the stripling was my friend,
And found a dark, untimely end ;
Oft comes, my midnight couch to haunt,
His spectre colorless and gaunt,
And vengeance goads me like a spur,
To find and slay his murderer.

XXIV.

I well remember that you made
Mordaunt upon the field your aid;
And wondering that one so brave
Was in the vernal time of life,
Presented him your own good glaive,
Yet red and reeking with the strife.
When wearied, to your broad domain
Retainers were led back again,
Your daughter, full of grace and fair,
Came ambling on her palfrey fleet,
With diamonds flashing in her hair,
A father and his troop to greet ;
And that she fixed admiring gaze
On the young hero by your side,
While prodigal of smiles and praise

You told her of his valor tried—
How in the *melee* of the fight
He wrested from a dead-man's hold
The gonfalon no longer bright,
And waved on high its ragged fold;
I well remember that a shout
From bearded lips rang gaily out,
When lightly from her snowy neck
A chain of gleaming gold she took,
The chivalrous Mordaunt to deck,
And told him, with a downcast look,
To keep the bauble as a meed
From woman for heroic deed.

XXV.

You gave the favorite a place
In the proud Castle of your race,
And mortal cannot deem it strange
That one thus raised from low estate
Should undergo a sudden change
While mingling with the *Great*;
Or marvel that the stripling grew
Elated and presumptuous too—
Forgetful in his dream of fame,
That his was not a titled name,
And that his fathers, *like mine own*,
Were heirs to poverty alone.
The Lady Blanche, your peerless child,

Upon the beardless minion smiled,
And chose him from the waiting train,
To gallop at her bridle rein,
And be her page in bower and hall,
A post of honor craved by all.

XXVI.

She used, when pensive twilight brought
Sweet moments of romantic thought,
To hear him wake the warbling lute,
And to her mood the measure suit—
Unknowing that a word of praise,
When ended were his glowing lays,
In rich, impressive accent spoken,
Would nurse an overdaring dream,
And to the blinded minstrel seem
Of her regard a thrilling token.
Warmed by her smile, with vig'rous start,
First love upgrew within his heart,
Like flower matured by tropic sun ;
And spurning bonds of weak control,
The crowning passion of his soul
Wild mastery of reason won ;
And in a luckless hour he made
Rash proffer of his heart and hand,
And only found, when prostrate laid,
That his high hopes were based on sand.
Your daughter heard the youth avow

His feelings with an angry brow,
And in a tone of blighting scorn,
Styled her adorer '*lowly born*,'
And bade him stoop his towering head
To woo a bride in cottage bred,
But never, in enamored strain,
Address a noble maid again.

XXVII.

Changed was his bearing from that hour;
He sought no more her chosen bower,
To cull some precious token flower.
One eve I met him on the road
Conducting to my rude abode,
And face again, so sad and pale,
I pray I never may behold,
While mournfully to me his tale
Of unrequited love he told.
His lute, to notes of joy once strung,
Became a cold, neglected thing,
And the dark, crawling spider hung
Her web-work on each rusted string—
He heard delightedly no more
Her footstep on the marble floor;
But think not that he grew remiss
In formal homage due her rank,
Though his crushed soul rich draught of bliss
No longer in her presence drank;

Thenceforth her dark and lustrous eye
Could not dissolve his apathy—
Thenceforth her voice, harp-like and clear,
Its sweetness wasted on his ear—
To him she was a prize withdrawn,
No more to rouse to high endeavor—
A morning star of beauty gone
From Love's delicious sky forever.

XXVIII.

Fresh in remembrance is the day,
When, clad in glittering garb, De Grai,
A young and reckless cavalier,
Came from the camp, invited guest,
Within your ancient hall to rest,
 And share its hospitable cheer.
His figure was of perfect mould,
And with the nobler wealth of mind,
Uncounted heaps of yellow gold,
And broad, rich acres were combined.
In his gay look, observer caught
No outward sign of guilty thought,
Although the callous soul within
Was foul with darkest deeds of sin—
His winning courtesy of air,
And eloquence, were suited well
The heart of woman to ensnare,
And kindle perilously there

The flame of love unquenchable ;
His ancestors held feudal sway
When France was in her younger day,
And last was he of his proud line ;
For on the hoof-beat battle plain
His sire, a bosom friend of thine,
While rushing to the charge, was slain.
Though young, with many a trusting maid,
The part of traitor he had played,
And deeply taught in arts to lure
From paths of innocence the PURE,
The wretch, insensible to shame,
Could well the hollow promise frame ;
While his poor victim could not brook
To harbor blighting thought, the while,
That his sincerity of look
Masked ruin, perjury and guile.
Your daughter was a gem too bright
To flash untarnished in his sight ;
A flower too innocent in dye
To lift its blushing charms on high,
Unnoted by his dooming eye.
'Oh, spare me the recital dread
'Of what ensued !' the Baron said ;—
'Oh, better had she kept aloof
From the foul fiend beneath my roof,
Or like some bird by serpent charmed,
That breaks the dreadful spell ere harmed,

In time to shun disgrace have fled.
From the dark mesh the monster spread ;
But, ah, an unsuspecting heart
By craft is easily enchained,
And soon his deep seductive art
The *pearl* of her affections gained !
At first I saw in young De Grai
A daughter's honorable choice,
And heard, with doubting and dismay,
The whisper of a friendly voice.

XXIX.

Rejoined the priest, in husky tone,
Whiter his cheek than pale tomb-stone—
“ Mordaunt that horrid warning spoke,
And tumult in your bosom woke ;
Then eager Blanche Le Troye to save
From doom more dreadful than the grave,
You drove the recreant from your door,
And with a look that menaced strife,
Forbade him cross its threshold more,
On peril of his limb and life ;
But could not make the *doomed one* think
That he had plotted her undoing,
And that she stood upon the brink
Of shameful, everlasting ruin :
Thrice blest are they who only shed
Tears for the unpolluted dead—

Who mark the rounded mould above
The children of their hope and love,
In contrast with that wretched sire
Whose sorrow is consuming fire,
Who mourns an erring daughter driven
From bliss on earth, from home in heaven !
One night, tempestuous and wild,
In secret fled your hapless child,
And when the morrow came, you heard
From fond lip fall no greeting word :
Her form was missing in the hall,
Her palfrey absent from the stall—
A glove upon the marble stair
Had fallen from her fingers fair,
And near the castle gate were found
Fresh hoof-marks on the sandy ground,
Disclosing palpably to sight
That Blanche was not alone in flight.

xxx.

Alarum notes from turret bell
Were wafted over lawn and dell,
And bold dependents of the soil,
Well trained to arm for sudden fray,
Threw by their implements of toil,
That martial summons to obey.
Still like a trumpet in mine ear,

Your cry of eager haste I hear—
“Outspeed the beagle on the track,
“And *dead*, or *living*, bring her back !
“But leave behind a mangled corse,
“The partner of her crime—to *horse* !”
Then loud the clash of armor rang,
And horsemen on their coursers sprang,
And in pursuit, with dangling rein,
Swept like a blast across the plain.
Up hills precipitous and steep,
And over rivers dark and deep,
Through sombre wood and winding dell,
Plied were the scourge and rowel well.

XXXI.

In vain for many leagues they sped,
The fugitives were far ahead;
And long ere night the troop came home,
Faint and exhausted from the chase,
On jaded chargers, white with foam,
And lagging in their pace ;
But that poor youth did not return
Who bravely led them forth at morn ;
For written was his vow on high
To *save* an erring maid, or *die*.
On, on he urged his noble brute
When followers gave o'er pursuit :
Night, hunger and a pathway dim

Were no impediments to him—
His heart was proof to peril dire ;
What recked he of the set of sun ?
From Lust to glad a frantic sire,
 An angel must be won ;
And nerved by thoughts like these, his steed
With spur he pushed to headlong speed.
Weeks flew, and in her lonely cot
A mother's heart grew sick and sore ;
In vain she mourned her bitter lot—
Mordaunt, the valiant, came no more ;
But haply, ere his fall was known,
Hushed was her broken-hearted moan.
“If aught of him you know, *relate* !
“Long have I sought to learn his fate”—
Quoth old Le Troye in anxious tone.

xxxii.

A few months after, I became
A convert to Loyola's creed,
And tired like him of phantom fame,
Kissed crucifix and counted bead,
The duties of my holy sphere
My steps conducted far and near.
One day, (the sun was nearly set,)
A peasant in Lorraine I met :
Clouds, black with storm, were in the sky—
No cheering hostelry was nigh,

And fain, belated on my way,
Was I beneath his roof to stay;
For with a troubled look he told
Of traveller shot down for gold,
Of Danger lurking on the road,
And midnight murderer abroad.
“Not long ago,” cried he, “my dream
“Was broken by a dismal scream,
“Preceded by a pistol shot;
“And darting wildly from my cot,
“I heard, while flesh grew chill with fright,
“The clattering of hoofs in flight.
“Next morn, upon the beaten ground,
“A stranger cold in death I found—
“The ball, with fatal aiming sped,
“Had made deep lodgment in his head—
“And his dark locks, all stiff with gore,
“The *passing wind could lift no more*.
“His brow was frowning, and a brand
“Clung to the unrelaxing hand,
“While reckless all of rider slain,
“A steed grazed near with broken rein,
“Black as the midnight’s darkest dyes,
“Save a white star between his eyes,
“Who, when we strove to catch him, ran
“As if he spurned the rule of man.

XXXIII.

“Without exhorting priest or pall,
“We gave the stranger burial;
“And on the spot where he is laid
“A waving elm throws pleasant shade.
“His hat, pierced by the fatal ball,
“And vestments, hang on yonder wall,
“And from his rigid neck and cold,
“I took this costly *chain of gold*.”

Before he told the story out,
My brain was free from darkening doubt;
For, added to the chain and garb,
His faithful picture of the barb,
Mordaunt's unhappy exit left,
Of dread uncertainty bereft.

XXXIV.

His relics from their *bloody* shroud
For retribution called aloud,
And thinking of the friendly band
That erst our hearts in love allied,
Asunder by a ruthless hand
Divided at untimely tide,
I tasked my energies to trace

The reeking author of the crime,
Like bloodhound to his lurking place;

And Havre sought, but not in time,
A bark to view in full career,
Bound to another hemisphere,
From kindred, home and country bear
De Grai and his companion fair.

xxxv.

Across a broad expanse of sea
The coward murderer may flee,
And finding covert, dark and rude,
May baffled justice long elude.
Aye! even trust that lapse of days
Will dim remembrance of his guilt;
That man again will kindly gaze,
Forgetful of the blood he spilt;
But soon or late, the gory deed
Will awful punishment succeed;
The dark assassin of Mordaunt
Feels safe within his greenwood haunt,
And little deems the coming day
Will guide avengers on their way.
The cheering thought sustains his soul,
A thousand leagues of water roll
Between me and the slain;
And that old father, gray with years,
Who mourns a daughter lost, while tears
Bedew his cheek like rain,
Poor self-beguiler! o'er his head

The sable wing of Death is spread,
And Vengeance, with his dooming eye,
And sharp, unsparing blade, is nigh—
Soon, soon from the gloom of its scabbard to dart
And drink the last drop of his recreant heart!

XXXVI.

Enough of prating!— on the hill,
The tall old evergreens are still,
And the south wind no longer weaves
Gay roundelay amid the leaves,
Or flies the dreaming wave to curl,
By moonlight changed to liquid pearl—
No rustling whisper, from the reeds
That fringe yon marshy bay, proceeds,
And in primeval groves around
There is a transient death of sound.
The howling beast of prey hath made
His meal of carnage in the shade,
And sought long since his dark retreat,
Crackling the brush beneath his feet.
I, too, must find a rugged bed,
For the mid hour of night hath fled—
Throughout my frame I slowly feel
A drowsy, numbing torpor steal,
And as we march by morning light,
Our limbs require repose—GOOD NIGHT!

YONNONDIO.

CANTO SECOND.

THE COTTAGE.

If hallowed by Love's presence bright, a home
Far in the wild is more to be desired
Than gorgeous chambers of a royal dome,
Where restless hearts, by envy ever fired,
Throb in proud breast, where joyance hath expired ;
Mine be the hut, if there Affection dwells,
Though meanly be its occupants attired ;
For the blind Deity hath wondrous spells
That fill with golden light Earth's worst receptacles.

I.

The rosy pencillings of Dawn
On a pleasant sky were clearly drawn,
And changed the clouds of the Orient grew
From dull gray tint to a golden hue.
The distant top of the wooded height
Was edged with a rim of tender light,

And thicket, fountain, rock and tree
From cloudless sun a radiance drank,
While washed the rapid Genesee,
With reddened wave, the crumbling bank.
The clasping vine on the river shore,
Twined round the ponderous sycamore ;
And near, in strange confusion piled,
Lay fallen giants of the wild,
Decaying marks of ages flown,
By the fierce tornado overblown ;
On the grassy brink thick willows grew,
And gloom on the passing current threw,
While pensile boughs hung down to lave
Their pale green leaves in the gurgling wave ;
On the long unbroken ridge above,
The walnut, oak and maple spread
Their knotted, barky arms, and wove
A dark pavilion overhead :
Beyond, encircled by the grove,
A glade lay basking in the light,
Like an emerald gem in the locks of night,
And the fresh and unpolluted earth
To flowers of an hundred hues gave birth.
Such haunt the dreaming bards of old
Chose for the fay his court to hold,
From din of crowded mart afar,
When the moon was in her diamond car ;
And a being of celestial mien

Was moving on its carpet green,
Bright as the Fabled Fairy-queen :—
But her cheek with sorrowing was pale,
Nor could the breath of morning dry,
Or the vivid beam of day exhale
The tear-drop in her dark blue eye.

II.

A zone of brilliant damask graced
Her delicate and rounded waist,
Confining, in its clasping fold,
Her bodice by a brooch of gold.
The comb amid her auburn curls
Was beautiful with studding pearls,
And the costly texture of her dress
Was passing strange in a wilderness.
The proud bird of the cliff had shed,
To grace the bonnet on her head,
The richest plumage of its wings ;
And, magnet of admiring eyes,
She would have borne the dazzling prize
Of beauty, in the hall of kings.

III.

Contrasting with her paler charms,
White neck, fair cheek and snowy arms,
An Indian maiden by her side
Moved with an air of native pride,

Clad in rich robe of otter-hide.
Her features were of swarthy dye,
But darker was her tameless eye,
And wavy tresses, thick and black,
Hung unrestrained adown her back,
The fawn had yielded up its skin
To form her velvet moccasin;
The bird of fire and noisy jay,
To fringe her dress, their feathers gay;
And her cheek was bright with lively stains,
Redder than blood in her branching veins.
Large beads were pendant from her ear,
Strung on the pliant thew of deer;
And on her bosom brightly shone
An amulet of mystic stone—
The gift of venerated seer,
To guard her form in the darkest hour,
From spirits fraught with evil power,
Who ride on the pinions of the breeze
To breed the tempest, blight the flower,
And taint frail mortals with disease.

IV.

“Cease, daughter of the Rising Sun!
Lamenting for thy little one!
The Land of fadeless verdure now
Is gladdened by his sunny brow;
Beyond the gulph of death, he smiles,

“Inhabitant of Happy Isles;
“But, vanishing like April snow,
“A few more years will come and go,
“And mother and her babe again
“Will meet where ties break not in twain.”
While in her glance soft pity shone,
Thus in wild, sweet, condoling tone,
The maid of deep black eye and hair
Address the lady, sad and fair,
Who answered—“Yester-eve the spot
“Grim wood-wolves had molested not,
“But dread the change since yester-eve—
“Can I do otherwise than grieve?”
Then, to another Continent,
In thought the pale, young mourner went,
Till rose, before her mental sight,
Home’s ancient hall, and landscape bright;
While strains, consorting with her wo,
Gushed from her lips in warbling low.

v.

SONG.

1.

There is a lordly castle
A vine-clad hill that crowns;
All darkly its stern battlement
Upon the valley frowns!

And from its ancient window,
My father, old and gray,
Perchance, in grief and loneliness,
Is looking forth to-day.

2.

In vain close watch he keepeth;
For on her native shore,
The foot of one he loveth
Will lightly tread no more.
The cup that he is drinking,
Is drugged with shame and tears;
And who will cheer the winter
Of his declining years?

3.

The grave hath won my mother,
In strife my brothers fell,
And when the old man dieth,
No child will ring his knell.
Oh, would that I had never
Heard Love's beguiling lay,
And fled with *him* in darkness
'Who stole my heart away.'

4.

There is a lordly castle
That stands beyond the sea;

And in the dreams of midnight
Its towers appear to me :
The cold and lonely chambers
Seem peopled by the dead,
And there my father boweth
In grief his aged head.

VI.

Why wandered, in so wild a place,
Descendant of a Christian race,
From home of childhood, far away,
Beyond the deep, and its tossing spray ?
Ask Love, wild lord, to whose control
Woman resigns her trusting soul ;
Who tempts her, by his wizard-spell,
Against a parent to rebel,
And hall of princely pomp exchange
Within a land of bloom and sun,
For wilderness, remote and strange,
Protected by her chosen one,
And in its trackless bosom share
His cup of comfort or despair.

VII.

On the dark borders of the wood
A lodge of rude construction stood,
And, upward from its hearth, the smoke
Rose, in blue wreaths, above the oak.

The wild hop to its hanging eaves
Clung with its prickly wealth of leaves ;
And poles, set firmly in the ground,
With upright forks before the door,
The weight of unhewn rafters bore ;
And honey-suckles twined around
The sylvan framework, rough and low,
Forming a verdant portico.
Rare, blooming shrubs of forest land,
Transplanted by a tasteful hand,
On the smooth lawn in front were growing,
Profusely round an odor throwing.
The waving sumach, pride of bowers,
And dogwood, white with snowy flowers—
Witch-hazle, spruce and sassafras
Flung shadows on the velvet grass.
A welling fount of water clear
In rocky basin bubbled near,
And air was vocal with the notes
Of rustling leaves and warbling throats.
The partridge beat his drum, and quail
Rose in dense conveys from the swale ;
And, adding romance to the scene,
The shambling elk shrill whistle gave,
While breaking through the thicket green
To plunge his muzzle in the wave.
The squirrel, from his snug retreat,
Came chattering on nimble feet ;

In quest of sweets, the house-wife bee
Left her populous home in the hollow tree,
And morn of summer never smiled
On brighter Eden in the wild.

VIII.

The lady, sorrowful and pale,
 Attended by the forest maid,
Followed a narrow, beaten trail,
 Till reached the cot embowered in shade.
Its creaking door was open thrown,
When her foot drew near the threshold-stone;
And forth a gallant hunter came,
Accoutred for the chase of game,
The pride of birth was in his bearing;
His look denoted noble daring,
And workmanship of foreign land
Was the long carbine in his hand.
A gay, green mantle, fringed with pelt,
Was lightly round his person flung,
And, from an ornamented belt,
His silver-mounted dagger hung;
His lip, sharp-cut and well-defined,
Betokened a decisive mind;
He bore, in haughty manhood's flower,
Bold heart in hate or friendship warm,
And elements of grace and power
Commingle in his stately form.

Browned by pursuits of war and chase
Were the lower features of his face ;
But closely curled, his dark brown hair
Lay shadowing a forehead fair.

His full, gray eye that mildly gleamed,
The brow's expression stern redeemed ;
Yet something told that wakened ire,
From its dark depths, would call up fire.

His mellow voice, not over-loud,
Accorded with a form so proud,
While questioned he his beauteous bride,
In tone to deep concern allied—

“ The cause of thy despondence tell !

Hath aught our favorite befell,
My peerless Blanche ?” “ Alas ! we found
The gift of Can-ne-hoot, the Chief,”

Responded she in tones of grief,

“ By wild-wolf mangled on the ground.

To lifeless limb and silken throat,
Clung dark red drops of clotted gore ;

My nimble fawn of dappled coat,
Will glad its mistress' gaze no more,
Or fly, on silver hoof of speed,
From her *caressing hand* to feed.”

“ Hah ! the wan color of those cheeks

A deeper source of wo bespeaks,
Than loss of fondling in the shade,
By forest prowler victim made ;

Why closely to thy bosom press
That blossom of the wilderness ?”

IX.

“ This flower,” replied his weeping spouse,

“ Now dying on my bosom, grew
Beneath those melancholy boughs,

More gloomy than sepulchral yew,
That bar the daylight out, and wave
Their leaves above our infant’s grave.

Some fierce, disturbing beast of prey

Hath partly torn the mound away ;

The piping storm hath overthrown

The mossy, rude memorial-stone ;

And the brown, desecrating mole

In the loose soil hath dug his hole ;

While near, the terror-waking snake

Darts, coils and rattles in the brake.

I saw no pleasant sunlight fall

On the cold sod of burial,

And wept, as if my heart would break,

While strove kind *Wun-nut-hay*,* in vain,

To smooth the broken sod again,

And ranged the wild for flowers to spread,

In dewy wreaths, above the dead ;

For well we know, though dark her skin,

A generous soul abides within.”

*The Beautiful.

X.

The hunter spoke not in reply,
But on his wife gazed tenderly;
And memories came back, unsealing
The bitter fount of mournful feeling,
While sob and trembling lip confessed
The *father* waking in his breast.
He thought of vaults across the brine,
That held the dead of his lofty line—
Of hiding palls of gorgeous fold,
And coffins rich in plated gold;
Then sighed to think his only child
Lay sepulchred in noteless mould,
Dim with the shadows of the wild,
And printed by the paw of beast
In quest of his grim, revolting feast.
He tried, *but bootless was the task*,
Drear Sorrow's outward sign to mask;
For his manly heart within him melt,
Though armed with enduring strength, he felt.
He turned, at length, to find relief,
In woodland sports, from haunting grief,
When warning hand, by the Indian maid,
Was lightly on his shoulder laid,
While a warrior from the wood emerged,
On by some pressing errand urged,

Who traced with swift, but noiseless tread,
A trail to his cottage-home that led.

XI.

“On-yit-ha* comes!” the maiden said;
“I know him by his bounding tread,
And figure like the cedar proud

That springs upon the mountain-head—
His face, more dark than midnight-cloud
When the Great Spirit speaks aloud—

His toughened battle-bow,
And arrows bound by fearful tether,
The skin of rattle-snake together,
Are signs of war and woe!”

XII.

“How fares my brother?” said De Grai,
When nearer the young chieftain drew;
“Why, armed and belted for the fray,
Comes he with brow of sable hue?”

Response the warrior of the shade,
With startling emphasis, thus made:
“White robbers from beyond the sea,
And tribesmen of Algonquin-stock,
Thick as the long grass on the lea,
And eager for the battle-shock,
Have boldly landed on our soil;
But vain will prove their dreams of spoil!

* Seneca for *Night-Hawk*.

Fierce, lurking messengers of wrath,
Dark, deadly serpents in their path,
 'Mid leaves and brush will coil."

Lured by the chase from home away,
My sire and I paced yesterday
 Blue Ca-da-rac-qui's strand,
And saw the foe in big canoes,
Near the dim hour of falling dew,
 In fearful numbers land.

Homeward I hurried with the news,
And soon will wake the battle-yell ;
For borne hath been the signal-word,
By our fleetest runner, to tribes that dwell
 Where the roar of the Upper Falls is heard.

All the fighting men of remote Gardow,
 And braves from Ton-ne-wan-da's stream,
Round the council-fire are gathering now,
 While scalp-locks wave, and weapons gleam ;
And thither, if the red man's friend,
Will On-yit-ha's adopted brother wend.

The mighty War-God of my race
Calls on his children the danger to face,
For thus to old seers spoke his terrible voice—
"Expecting grim banquet, the ravens rejoice ;
Up, up with the hatchet, long rusting in clay,
And wash, in red waters, the rust-stain away !"

XIII.

The lady heard the tidings dread,
With hand upon her forehead prest,
As if to lull its throb to rest ;
Then, in despairing accent, said—
“ Has Earth no place of bloom and light,
Where Peace may spread her wing of white ?
No pleasant isle, amid the sea,
Where mortal finds not misery ?
I nursed a pleasant dream that here

Our lives away would gently glide,
Like summer currents, calm and clear,
That meet no rocks in their career,

While mingling in one peaceful tide—
That virgin-charms, unknown to France,
In this New World would woo the glance :
But vainly have we reared yon cot,
Environed by the mossy wild ;
For sorrow, in thy greenest spot,
Oh Earth, attends a thankless child !
The little prattler, on whose face
A husband's image I could trace,
Was early torn from my embrace !
And now the men of blood are nigh,
With battle-smoke to hide the sky,
And drive us from our forest-home,
Like animals of chase to roam.

Ah ! since that dark and stormy night
Of hurried and clandestine flight,
When filial duty tried in vain
Lost sway from tyrant Love to gain—
And, reckless of the dreadful ire,
And curse of imprecating sire,
I scourged my palfrey, fleet as wind,
And left ancestral towers behind,
No sunbeams on my path have shone—
My heart—my heart no quiet known !
Though deep my guilt, and dark my lot,
Thy bride, De Grai, rebukes thee not ;
For on the suitor for his child,
A father fondly gazed, and smiled,
Till the black falsehood of my page
Changed his encouragement to rage.
I loved thee then, and love thee still,
Bright object of my girlish dream !
For herbless waste, or land of ill,
Would Eden, thou beside me, seem.”

XIV.

In tone of cheerfulness replied
The hunter to his weeping bride—
“ Let shadows from thy troubled heart,
Like mist before the morn depart ;
And trust in Him who reigns above,
Though now the sky is overcast,

For green, unfading home of love,
And days of sunny calm at last.
Though soon will wake to fearful life
The rushing hurricane of strife,
And bathe in blood the sinless flowers
That bloom in these primeval bowers,
Mine arm, while weapon it can wield,
Will buckler prove to thee, and shield;
And angels, if I fall, will bear
To Providence my dying prayer,
And *He* will guard his stricken child
Amid the perils of the wild.

xv.

“Thanks, dearest, for thy words of cheer!
They fill with melody mine ear;
And, hushing stormy doubt to rest,
Give birth to hope within my breast.
Oh God! forgive a thing of dust,
Who, in a dark, desponding hour,
In Thee forgot to place her trust,
Unmindful of thy saving power.
Though black the welkin overhead,
Thine eye the light of joy can shed;
Though whelming surges round me roll,
Thy whisper can becalm my soul,
And change the thunders of the sea
To low and lute-like melody.”

XVI.

On the blue sky, with face upraised,
One moment brief, the lady gazed ;
No cloud was on her forehead fair,
Fled were the shadows of despair,
And her bland countenance, the while,
Was lighted by a holy smile ;
As if she read of sin effaced,
In bright, celestial letters traced,
And heard, though darkly-born of earth,
The melody of golden lyres,
While creatures of immortal birth
Woke sweetly the transporting wires.
On-yit-ha, though untamed and rude,
On the fair daughter of old France,
In hushed and graceful attitude,
Fixed his admiring glance ;
And Wun-nut-hay, his forest-dove,
Gazed on her with a look of love,
While the proud husband, to her side
Advancing with a rapid stride,
His arm affectionately threw
Around her neck of snowy hue.

XVII.

“ Betake thee to thy favorite spot,
Yon vine-hung arbor near the cot,
Where, guarded from the summer heat,

Is rudely framed a rustic seat,
And the wild cherry-tree in bloom
Gives out a delicate perfume :
There, blithely in the cooling shade,
A garland for thy temples braid,
Or watch the hum-bird while around
The rose he wheels with buzzing sound,
Or list while gentle Wun-nut-hay
Narrates some legend, strange and old,
To speed the weary hours away,
Of gifted seer and sachem bold.

Hence to the council-fire I go,
Where, planning ruin for the foe,

Old Can-ne-hoot and chiefs convene ;
My homeward whistle will be heard,
Ere twilight warns the roving bird
To mossy perch in forest green.

Why look around with timorous eye,
As if the day of doom was nigh,

The fierce invader close at hand ?
Between him and our cabin lie

Full many roods of forest-land :
And ere his banner courts the gale
That oversweeps this beauteous vale,
And the wood-warblers flee afar,
Scared by the thunder-tones of war,
I will provide a still retreat,
And thither, Blanche, conduct thy feet.

XVIII.

In haste the hunter breathed adieu ;
Then, guided by On-yit-ha, cross'd
The level glade, and passing through
The archway of the grove, to view
 In leafy gloom was lost.
The forester his path pursued,
With look cast down in musing mood :—
He paused not when his careless tread
Awoke the glittering copper-head ;
Nor did his deadly carbine ring
When bounded by the bleating doe,
And the wild crane, on heavy wing,
Rose from still pond, in dingle low.
Unnoted by his glance, the bear
Went growling to his distant lair :
Dark thoughts, a melancholy train,
And sting of self-reproach, we fain
Once felt, would never feel again,
Within his heart's most deep recess
Unsealed the spring of bitterness.

XIX.

“Alone the blame fall on my head !”
Communing with himself he said ;
“I lured her from a sunny clime,
Bright with the wrecks of olden time,

The luxuries of titled Pride,
And vineyards on each green hill-side;
Attendants waiting on her word,
Clad in the livery of their lord;
Her favorite bower, and castled dome,
Amid the cultured fields of Gaul,
With me across the sea to roam,
And told her that a forest-home
Was brighter than a father's hall—
That fruits would blush on every tree,
And air be fraught with melody—
That life would prove *one* summer-morn
Fragrant with blossoms newly-born,
While Heaven would weave for us a charm
To banish ill and ward off harm.
Alas! the love of womankind,
How deep, how lasting, but how *blind*!
She laughed with joy, believing true
The portraiture of bliss I drew,
Foreseeing not a father wear
For her the crimson blush of shame;
Affliction whitening his hair,
And scandal busy with her name

XX.

Thus communed with himself De Grai,
Proceeding on his woodland-way,
Until a loud, long, fearful cry

Awoke him from his revery ;
And searchingly he fixed his glance
On the red warrior in advance,
Who stood, like form of sculptor rare,
 With face directed toward the river,
And scalp-lock fluttering in the air,
 And shaft drawn partly from the quiver.
Again that startling cry was heard,
Harsh as the croak of carrion-bird,
When prey, long watched, expires at last,
Alluring to a red repast ;
And far more dismal than the scream
Of the fierce panther in the night ;
When the bold hunter, from his dream
Amid the leaves, his sylvan bed,
Wakes with a shudder of affright,
And scans the broad boughs overhead,
Expecting momentarily to feel
The mangling tush, and claw of steel.

XXI.

‘Pale brother, haste!’ On-yit-ha said,
And grasped convulsively his bow,—
“Our runner, with impatient tread,
Brings tidings of the ruthless foe :
Haste! for the soil beneath our feet,
Ere morrow ends, may blush with gore,
And bosoms that now warmly beat,

Pierced by the victor, throb no more ;
That shout, still ringing in the dell,
Announces wo—I know it well !”
De Grai pursued his tawny guide
With fleeter foot and longer stride ;
The swamp they threaded, and around
Impenetrable thickets wound,
Whose solemn depths of twilight-gloom
Day could not enter, and illume ;
Nor paused the savage scene to view,
While the dread warning louder grew :
Then crossing streams, obscure with shade,
Haunts by the lonely heron made,
And where the wood-duck reared her brood
In deep, unbroken solitude,
Reached a broad opening in the wood.

XXII.

Fair was the scene !—before the gaze
Lay verdant fields of twinkling maize,
 Bared to the full, bright blaze of day ;
And meads, to charm romantic eye,
Whereon the grass was thick and high,
 Spread their green carpets far away.
Oft had the youthful Chevalier
Paused, in pursuit of antlered deer,
 That fairy landscape to behold,
Charmed by the painted tribe of flowers,

Frail offspring of June's laughing showers,
And Nature's richest mould :
But heeding not its beauties now,
He hurried on with heated brow,
And sent, though on enchanted ground,
No glance of admiration round.
Tall orchards, near the river-shore,
The germs of bright abundance bore;
And, farther on, in clusters dark,
Stood many cone-like huts that sent,
From open roofs of cedarn bark,
Blue smoke-wreaths toward the firmament.
Though in the school of Vauban trained,
De Grai had often wielded lance,
And his fierce charger sternly reigned
On the red battle-field for France,
The scene before him in his soul
Roused a deep dread that mocked control,

XXIII.

A rugged structure, low and long,
Was circled by a savage throng,
Armed, decked and painted for the fight;
While sachem, seer and chiefs of fame,
To light the fire of council, came
With brows more dark than night.
A thousand scalp-locks, trimmed with care,
Streamed like wild coursers' manes in air,

When, riderless, they turn to fly :
Dark, glowing eyes destruction breathed,
And the long dagger was unsheathed,

The hatchet whirled on high :
The chich-hi-kon, full loudly blown,
Gave out lugubrious monotone,
And drum of hollow block of oak
And o'erdrawn hide of wild-deer made,
Rung to the war-club's measured stroke,
While the deep booming music woke
The sleeping echoes of the shade.

XXIV.

The weak and tottering old man,
Whose arm was shrunken with decay,
Roused by the tocsin of his clan,
Grasped the dread implement of fray ;
And sternly moved amid the crowd,
Forgetful that his form was bowed,
And that his palsied limbs would fail,
And falter on the battle-trail.

XXV.

The nimble stripling, who had thrown
The tomahawk in sport alone—
From the light echo of whose tread
The timid mink would scarce have fled—
Who hitherto, on his young cheek,

Had never worn war's clouded streak,
Whose puny shaft had only drawn
The blood of bird or bounding fawn,
Fired by the common danger, round
His slender waist the war-belt bound,
And, proudly for the conflict plumed,
The bearing of the brave assumed.

XXVI.

Old spoils of victory, that long
Had hung upon the wigwam wall,
Forth by the tribe were brought with song,
Ancestral glory to recall,
And kindle in the son desire
To rival in renown his sire.
Scalps from the fallen rudely torn,
In smoke cured artfully, and dried;
By wrinkled hags about were borne
With gestures of ferocious pride.
From some, on crimson hoop extended,
The grisly hair of age depended,
And thick, coarse locks, unblanched by time,
Of manhood butchered ere his prime :
From *others*, in soft clusters, hung
The silken ringlets of the young,
And the long tress of golden grain
That told of Christian mother slain.
De Grai a look of horror cast

On these sad records of the past,
And felt a sense of terror tame
The beating pulses of his frame—
An icy chill, one instant, stay
Life's crimson current on its way.

XXVII.

Dark arms were menacingly raised,
While on the hideous spoil he gazed :—
Though Can-ne-hoot in peace had met
The stranger from his country driven—
Had smoked with him the calumet,
And food and habitation given,
His garb and face revealed him *one*
Whose race were from the Rising Sun—
A subject of the "*Grand Monarque*"
Whose disciplined and banded braves
Were piercing forests, deep and dark,
To awe their nation into slaves—
Then quench in blood their cabin-fires,
And trample on the green old graves
Of patriarchal sires.

XXVIII.

Amid that raging crew alone,
Ill would the son of France have fared;
For daggers, wrought of flint and bone,
With fell intent were round him bared,

And knives, that Christian blood had shed,
Described bright circles round his head :
But the fierce natives of the wood,
Though madly thirsting for his blood,
From murderous assault forebore,
Restrained by their young Sagamore,
Who forced, through groups of warriors tall,
A passage to the Council-Hall.

END OF CANTO SECOND.

YONNONDIO.

CANTO THIRD.

THE WAR DANCE.

Wake, children of Genundewah! the cry
Of fierce Invasion floats upon the gale;
The spirits of the dead are rushing by,
And white-haired seers are prophesying bale:
The Dove of Peace hath left our lovely vale—
Great Yonnondio leads the host of France,
And in the coming battle will prevail,
If we neglect to sharpen knife and lance,
And round the red post wheel, in war's terrific dance.

Swear that the foe's insulting foot shall not
On one green grave in triumph be impressed;
For ever dear to brave men is the spot
Where the white bones of their forefathers rest.
The Land of Shadows, in the clear south-west,
Hath hunting grounds known only to the just,

And the red warrior of the dauntless breast :
Snatch, then, the buried tomahawk from dust,
And clothe its blade, once more, in battle's gory crust.

I.

De Grai, in Christian Court, had seen
Anointed Louis on his throne,
Clad in appareling whose sheen
The lustre of the stars outshone,
While the bold Barons of the land,
Below him stood, a knightly band,
With churchmen proud the crosier bearing,
And dark, monastic vesture wearing,
And less of awe, while liegemen knelt
In presence of their monarch, felt,
Than by old Can-ne-hoot, attired
In shaggy toga, was inspired,
While, proudly as became a king,
Presiding in monarchical state,
His glance surveyed the tawny ring
Of counsellors that round him sate.

II.

Stern Time, in robbing form and face
Of youthful symmetry and grace,
Could not subdue his pride, or dim
The hawk-like fierceness of his gaze ;
And brawny chest and iron limb

Unwasted were by length of days :
His lofty forehead was a page
Rough with the wrinkling lines of age ;
His port majestic and proud,
His form commanding and unbowed,
Like some old oak, in ancient moss,
And rough, indented rind encased,
From whose gray trunk the vernal gloss
Had many a lustrum been effaced ;
Still lifting loftily his head,
Without one bough decayed or dead,
Though many a howling storm had tried
In dust to hurl his honors down—
Asunder rend his arms of pride,
And scatter to the winds his crown.

III.

“The bear-skin for Od-deen-yo* spread,”
With courteous mien the sachem said—
“Though scion of a race I scorn,
And far beyond the Salt-Lake born ;
Though pale his face, like dogwood-flowers,
And garb and language unlike ours,
Fill with *ke-nic-kee-nic* the bowl !
He is a Seneca in soul,
For sundering the filial band
That bound him to his native land,

* White Chief.

Here, where the herding red-deer roam,
With one fair flower he makes his home.
De Grai the seat assigned him took,
With hesitating step and look;
For murmurs ran the circle round,
 And many a warrior gaunt and grim,
His teeth, in half-hushed anger, ground,
 And scowled with fiendish hate on him.
Some, from long pipes of purple stain
Significant of battle, smoked;
And plumes that decked each stem of cane
Torn from the wild swan, owl and crane,
 In slaughter had been soaked;
And others from their girdles drew
Pipe-tomahawks of sanguine hue,
 Adorned with shell and wampum-bead;
And fragrant clouds rose blue and wreathed,
While through the hollow haft they breathed
 The vapors of the weed.

IV.

On bosoms bare the figures rude
Of wolf and eagle were tattoo'd;
And never knight of high descent
At joust or glittering tournament,
Or on the trampled battle-field,
 While blood was emptied out like wine
Bore, on bright bannaret and shield,

The badge and motto of his line,
More proudly than each savage man
The wild escutcheon of his clan.

v.

Linked with armorial signs that blaze
On knightly armor of old days,
Are tales of high achievement done,
Great cities stormed, and conflicts won :
Hence scion of a line renowned
Feels eye dilate and pulses bound,
When he beholds, with burning glance,
His father's ancient cognizance :
The red man boasts no herald-roll,
But views, with equal pride of soul,
The painted symbol on his skin
Allied to memory of sires,
Famed for their prowess, while within
His bosom wakes heroic fires.
Like them he pants for stirring deeds ;
In the swift chase the moose outspeeds ;
Directs with skill his birchen bark,
Though wave be loud and heaven be dark ;
And scorns to fly, though round him rise
A myriad of enemies :
He swears, like them, no fear to know
When stake-bound by exulting foe,
And though around his tortured frame

In crimson volume rolls the flame,
And his flesh shrivels like the grass
When death-fires o'er the prairie pass,
He breathes in that dread moment out,
With taunting tone, his battle-shout;
Recounts, while glorying in pain,
The numbers he has scalped and slain,
And chaunts, with faint, expiring breath,
His stern, defying song of death.

VI.

Old Can-ne-hoot arose at last,
And back his shaggy mantle cast—
In the red girdle, round his waist,
His fur tobacco-pouch replaced—
On the grim throng a moment gazed;
Then, while his tinkling bracelets rung,
His arm with grace unstudied raised,
And spoke thus in his woodland-tongue.

VII.

“Victors in many a forest fight,
The bird of peace has taken flight!
The tree in which she framed her nest,
Smoothed the bright feathers on her breast,
And tuned her throat to notes so clear
That the keen hunter paused to hear,
Is robbed of its majestic bough,

Is shorn of its broad, leafy shield,
And from its trunk, dishonored now,
Profaning hands the bark have peeled,
And given to the naked wood
The deep, terrific stain of blood.
Oft, brothers, have the paths of war
From home and country led us far—
The Twig-twee in his distant wild
Our vow of vengeance heard and smiled;
But vainly was his good bow strung,
While on the wind our war-cry rung—
As well might osier frail essay,
The whirlwind on its march to stay,
As tribe, who quaffs Miami's wave,
Abide fierce onslaught of the brave.
Our hatchet smote him on the head;
Wild wolves upon his flesh have fed;
Red, crackling flames devoured his cot;
Pappoose and squaw, we spared them not.

VIII.

“Our muffled tread at midnight deep,
The Huron heard not in his sleep—
Still as the dew by evening wept,
We stole upon him while he slept;
The knife, in darkness, pierced his side,
The gore upon his scalp is dried.
The prowling Eries of the Lake
Our chain of friendship dared to break;

The waters moan upon the shore,
Their feet will print its sands no more.
As flame consumes the yellow leaves,
When the sad wind of autumn grieves,
Their warriors perished in the fire
Of our wild, unrelenting ire—
We took no captives, and their race
Among the tribes, have now no place :
Well was the work of ruin done !
Their bones bleach in the rain and sun ;
Hushed are the chase-grounds where they ranged ;
To ashes cold their huts are changed ;
Their bows are broken, and the deer,
Unscared by shaft, is browsing near.

IX.

“ Regardless of our ancient fame,
Our conquests, and our dreaded name,
Fierce Yon nondio and his band
Are thronging in our forest-land.
And ask ye why with banner spread
His force the Frank hath hither led ?
We scorched with fire the skulking hounds
Who dared to cross our hunting-grounds,
A trading, base, dishonest band,
Who, in exchange for pelts, had given
Guns, lead and black explosive sand,
To tribes our power had westward driven :

The wise no vain distinction know
Between sly fox who arms a foe,
And hands that boldly deal the blow.

X.

“Shall warriors who have tamed the pride
Of rival nations, far and wide,

At their own hearths be thus defied ?
Shall it be said the beast of prey
His den abandoned far away,
And, seeking out the hunter, found
His aim less true, less deep the wound ?
Shall it be told in other days,
The tomahawk we feared to raise,
While the green hillocks, where repose
The cherished dust of woodland-kings,
Insulted by the march of foes,

Gave back indignant echoings ?
Base is the bosom that will quake
With one degrading throb of fear,
When fame and country are at stake,
Though an armed troop of fiends are near !
Oh ! never can such craven tread
The happy chase-grounds of the dead ;
Between him and that fount of bliss
Will yawn a deep and dread abyss ;
And doomed will be his troubled ghost
To range that land forever more,

Upon whose lone and barren coast
The black and bitter waters roar.
The clime of everlasting day,
Where groves, all red with fruitage, wave,
And beauty never fades away,
Is only trodden by the brave."

XI.

In answer to the bold harangue,
Each warrior from his bear-skin sprang,
And, ominous of coming strife,
Clashed tomahawk and scalping knife.
A signal by the chief was made
To close the Council, and obeyed:
His eloquence of look and word
Dark depths of every heart had stirred;
And 'twas no time in dull debate
For other tongues of war to prate,
Warned by the loud foreboding cry
Of his fleet scout that foes were nigh.
With joy in his stern mien, he scann'd
The waving scalp-locks of his band;
Heard, with pleased ear, their vengeful vows,
And marked with pride their frowning brows.
In single file he then arrayed
His quivered brethren of the shade,
And a slow dance, with measured tread,
Around the painted war-post led:

Well timing to the fall of feet,
The hollow-sounding drum was beat ;
Maize-kernels in dry gourd-shell swayed,
By hand of crone, dull rattling made,
And wildly rose the chaunted notes
Of battle from a thousand throats.

XII.

WAR SONG OF THE ON-GUI-HON-WI.

1.

Red sons of the forest ! leave woman and hearth ;
Too long have our tomahawks slumbered in earth ;
Array'd in the garb that your ancestors wore,
With arrows of death fill the quiver once more.

2.

Our seer has beheld, in the visions of night,
The chieftains of yore, and they whisper of fight ;
The song of the raven is sad in the wood,
Haste ! gorge, on the morrow, her younglings with
blood.

3.

That man of our tribe who flees basely away,
When dirge for brave men is the clash of the fray,
Thenceforth, in the garb of a squaw, shall be drest
With our totem erased by the knife from his breast.

4.

Untrodden no more, let the wild-herbage grow
In yon leaf-shaded trial that conducts to the foe;
But plain be the path by our war-parties worn,
While scalps, on red poles, by the *bravest* are borne.

5.

On-gui-hon-wi!—unite in one legion of dread,
Like the turbulent river by mountain streams fed;
Then rushing, all painted and plumed for the fray,
Sweep the host of invasion, like drift-wood, away.

XIII.

Like cougar, mad with taste of blood,
A warrior darted from the throng,
While the dim arches of the wood
Rang with their gathering song—
High overhead his hatchet raised,
While lightning from his eye-ball blazed,
Then buried in the solid oak
Its glittering blade with rending stroke.
Changed was the dance from measure slow
To frantic leap and deafening yell,
And on *imaginary foe*
An hundred weapons fell,
'Till, hacked and splintered to the ground,
In fragments lay the post around.

XIV.

Wild and more wild the tumult grew,
Amid the crazed, demoniac crew ;
Knives flashed, as man to man opposed ;
Dark forms in mimic combat closed ;
Upwhirled in clouds the summer dust ;
Quick blows were aimed, and furious thrust ;
With face convulsed the fallen gasped,
And murd'rous hands the scalp-lock grasped ;
Some from the swathing-board cut loose,
With seeming hate, the swart pappoose,
Then raised it, struggling, by the heel,
And pointed at its throat the steel ;
While others, on the trampled ground,
Limbs of the frantic mother bound,
And her shrill cry with laughter drowned.
Feigned was base flight and bold advance ;
Poised was the long, bone-headed lance ;
Stout arms the heavy war-club swayed ;
Elastic bows sharp twanging made ;
And mocked, with modulated tone,
Was victor-shout and dying groan.

XV.

A quavering whistle of the chief
Hushed suddenly the combat brief ;
Succeeding to the sounds of fray,

Heard were the wind and leaves at play ;
Like graven figures of repose,
Stood friends and counterfeited foes,
Nor murmur breathed, or member stirred,
Awaiting but the signal-word.
Like stillness broods o'er grove and plain,
When by hath rolled the hurricane ;
Or on the bosom of the deep,
When bark hath found an ocean-sleep,
And shrieks, heard lately 'mid the roar
Of minute-guns, go up no more.

XVI.

Pleased was De Grai to mark the power
Of Can-ne-hoot in that dread hour ;
The spell by which a breath subdued
The red man, in his wrathful mood,
And deference to rank, displayed
By those grim warriors of the shade,
In prompt compliance, tamed and still,
To one whose law was *kingly will*.
At length the sachem waved his hand,
And suddenly dispersed the band.
Repairing to his lodge, each brave
Fresh coat of paint his visage gave,
In the grim process trying well
His genius for the *terrible* ;
Inspected, with a careful glance,

Bow, arrows, knife and tapering lance—
Precaution that tried veteran takes,
Ere noiseless march on foe he makes.

XVII.

Approaching, grave of look, the place
Where stood De Grai with thoughtful face,
Him thus old Can-ne-hoot address :
“ My totem gleams upon your breast,
But countrymen of thine are foes,
Who soon will hear our twanging bows :
Between these plains and their array,
Will lie an *unobstructed* way
That my adopted son may tread,
Without hair injured on his head.”
“ Thanks, father, thanks !—I duly prize
Thy noble offer ; but these eyes
May never, I devoutly pray,
See sunlight of another day,
When comes the hour that we are found
Antagonists on conflict-ground !
I deem that wild ambition’s lust
Impels great Yonnondio on,
To wage with thee a war unjust,
And never shall my sword be drawn,
Save on the side of truth and right ;—
As neutral I will shun the fight.”

XVIII.

“Enough!—ere shriek of death is heard,
Find refuge for thy singing bird ;
Then, far from battle’s crushing stroke,
Sit on the mat of peace, and smoke :
In yon thick-walled and guarded hold,
Will crowd the helpless and the old,
And thither thy beloved one bear,
Ere fall of night’s embrowning shades.”
In view arose a gloomy square,
Hedged round with massy palisades,
By fallen trees, on every side,
Of ponderous trunk, well fortified,
Through which, though numerous and fierce,
Unscathed no charging band could pierce,
If missiles by the sheltered foe
Were boldly launched from gun and bow.

XIX.

“How can Od-deen-yo e’er repay
His generous father?”—cried De Grai;
Ahungered and on weary feet
Came the pale wanderer and his spouse ;
You gave him venison to eat,
A cabin and a pleasant seat
Beneath the woodland boughs.
“Talk not of recompense,”—replied

The chief in tones of wounded pride :
“ Scorned ever be that tribesman’s name,
Unworthy of heroic sires,
Who basely would requital claim,
If pinched with want and weak of frame,
Sworn foeman food requires ;
Or roof above a hearth-stone warm,
To guard him from the pelting storm.
Who ever sought in peace my hut,
And found its door unkindly shut ?
Who ever, languishing in pain,
Asked Can-ne-hoot for help in vain ?
The wealth of that enchanted Isle
Chased vainly on the waters blue,
Though bending to his oar, the while,
The hunter speeds his bark canoe,
If piled before me in return
For friendly office, I would *spurn !*”

xx.

De Grai rejoined not ;—loud and high
Rose yell that ended colloquy ;
Fixed, piercing glance the sachem turned
On point whence came that signal-call,
And lo ! his trusty scout discerned,
Staggering toward the Council-Hall !
Dishevelled was his plummy crest ;
An arrow quivered in his breast ;

Deeply-ensanguined was his skin
From naked waist to moccasin,
And feebly was his form upborne
By limbs relaxing, bruised and torn.
While reeling through the wondering crowd,
Gleamed his wild eye with triumph proud ;
For, baffling hounds, the worried bear,
Though sorely galled, had reached his lair.
With hand in his own life-blood drenched,
The chivalrous scalp-lock he clenched,
Denoting, by that gesture fierce,
That vainly did the arrow pierce,
Long as that martial lock of hair
Streamed like a flag in troubled air,
Preserved, mid danger, flight and strife,
From mangling edge of hostile knife.

XXI.

“ What news ?—and why like hunted deer,
Though strong of arm and fleet of foot,
Pierced by the barb, comes Yuk-wi* here ?”
In calm, deep tone asked Can-ne-hoot.
“ A bow-shot from the Hon-e-oye,
Armed and impatient to destroy,
Out-lying Hurons raised the yell :
Wounded, the fleetest of their race
I distanced in a weary chase,

* The Bear.

Through thicket, brake and fell.
An hundred rods or more beyond
The outlet of Au-tau-gua Pond,
Where, by dark stream, the trail is cross'd,
Glimpse of the skulking knaves I lost.
When air the swift bald eagle cleaves,
Lean, cawing crows behind he leaves—
Round my remains the wolfish crew
Will never raise the death-halloo,
For thanks to Ou-we-nee-you still
My scalp is"—

He could speak no more,
But trembled with a wintry chill,
And from his throat in crimson rill

Gushed forth the strangling gore :
He groped about, as if dun night
Had suddenly excluded light ;
For weapon in his beaded belt
Instinctively the fingers felt,
As if the warrior wished to try,
With rending death, the mastery ;
Then, gasping, fell upon the sod,
A reddened corse—a lifeless clod.

XXII.

Sped from the throng, to wail his fate,
His young, untimely-widowed mate ;
Tore her long hair of raven gloss,

At thought of her distracting loss ;
Then flung herself upon the dead,
With piercing shriek and arms outspread.
Nor moved, nor saddened, nor amazed,
Upon that scene the sachem gazed :
Deep calm upon his brow reposed,
Commanding will emotion curbed,
And not one *outward* sign disclosed
That *inly* was the soul disturbed.
De Grai the luckless scout had heard,
With heart by drear foreboding stirred,
For near his cot, embowered in green,
Last was the prowling Huron seen.
Unmindful of deportment grave,
That well becomes an Indian brave,
Though babes and women load the gale
With the wild notes of wo and wail,
On-yit-ha stood with flashing eye,
And muttered in an angry voice,
Assured that danger hovered nigh
The dusky maiden of his choice :
Then, holding with his sire discourse,
Besought him quickly to detail
A score of bowmen from his force ;
Northward to scour the river-vale,
Then safely to the fortress guide
Od-deen-yo's fair, endangered bride.
Permission prompt the sachem gave ;

And, guarded by an escort brave,
Led by the Night-Hawk of his clan,
De Grai, through swamp and bosky dell,
Pursued a path that parallel
With the dark river ran.

XXIII.

While on, the scouting party fared,
Old Can-ne-hoot for march prepared,
With the main body of his braves,
To guard his nation's hallowed graves.
"Loved grove, in which our dead are laid,—
Where droop long boughs their beds to shade,
Will be our place of ambushade;
And those degenerate hounds
May *Ut-co* bear to realms of night,
Who will not like their fathers fight
For home and hunting-lands in sight
Of those green, mossy mounds!"
Thus speaking, by a low, shrill whoop,
The chief in single file his troop
Formed, eager for the fray:
A swamp, of depth unsunn'd and dread,
In rear of his rude castle spread;
And thither the red monarch led,
With rapid, light and stag-like tread,
His picturesque array.

YONNONDIO.

CANTO FOURTH.

THE BOWER.

Danger's black cloud comes rolling from the north,
And gleams of lightning round its edges play ;
But tameless sons of Liberty go forth,
In thicket seldom visited by day,
To meet the vaunting spoilers on their way :
Back, Yonnondio!—ere your knightly crest
Is shorn of half its glory in the fray : [wrest
The *lords*, from whom your monarch fain would
With iron hand a realm, are *Romans of the West*.

I.

Their march no glad spectator cheered ;
No helmet shone, no war-horse reared,
Nor martial instrument was heard,
Nor banner by the breeze was stirred :

Their feet so lightly touched the ground
That not an echo woke to sound ;
And, glittering not with vain display,
They moved like shadows on their way,
Or misty shapes that fleetly glide
When winds disturb the mountain-side.
Sad non-combatants, left behind,
Gazed while a trace could be defined
Of that long line of warriors grim,
Erect of port, and lithe of limb ;
And when they vanished through
The dusky portals of the wood,
In groups the young and helpless stood
Some form beloved to view.

II.

The devious way on which they marched,
By braided boughs was overarched ;
And, right and left, spread far away
Fens, only lit by fire-fly's ray,
Dark with a tangled growth of vine,
Black ash, huge water-oak and pine,
Mixed with red cedar, mossed and old,
Set firmly in the watery mould.
Here, covered with a slime of green,
Stagnant and turbid pools were seen
Edged round with wild, aquatic weeds,
Long-bladed flag and clustering reeds,

Pond-lilies, oily-leaved and pale,
Red willow and the alder frail :

There, skeletons of groves gone by,
Sad objects to poetic eye !

Like monarchs by the battle-blast
Assailed and overthrown at last,
Wasted and torn in bough and stem,
And robbed of leaf-wrought diadem,
Lay rotting in their barky mail,
Indifferent to sun and gale.

Deep hollows in the miry clay,
Marked where their roots once spread away,
Now mixed with many a rugged mound
Formed when their fastenings were unbound,
Or wrenched, like gossamer, in twain,
By the wild, rushing hurricane.

III.

A stranger, though in woodcraft taught,
Would find that skill availed him nought
In that dark thicket, if astray
By hunted quarry lured away,
Though well each haunt and covert lone
To the brown forest-child was known.
Extending to its far-off bound,
A war-path, through the centre, wound,
So blind that practiced eye in vain,
For mark to guide the foot, would strain.

Now, all impression of the route,
In gurgling runnel, was washed out:
Anon, where deeper grew the shade
By intertwisted branches made,
Its crooked, winding course from sight
Was curtained by primeval night.

IV.

When the dark chieftain and his band,
Emerging from the swampy land,
Reached the dim borders of the grove
That glooms around the "*Haunted Cove*,"
The tempered glow of weary day,
Proclaiming the approach of night,
To gold transmuted leaf and spray
On upland-swell and wooded height ;
And, calmly in the western sky,
Resplendent emblems of repose !
Grouped clouds more delicate of dye
Than tintings of the half-blown rose.
A moment, in the mellow light,
Shone beaded belt and hatchet bright ;
A moment, from the yellow beam,
Ring, band and bracelet caught a gleam ;
Then the dark wood of boughs inweaved,
Within its depths the troop received.

v.

Beneath tall beeches, gray with eld,
Their labyrinthine course they held,
While well the hindmost of the line
From view concealed betraying sign;
Sending keen glances in the rear,
Lifting bowed herb and grassy spear,
Or doubling, when the oozy ground
Yielded beneath the lightest foot,
Like hunted foxes when the hound
And hunter are in hot pursuit.

The red-breast, perched in arbor green,
Sad minstrel of the quiet scene—
While hymning, for the dying sun,
Strains like a broken-hearted one,
Raised not her mottled wing to fly
As swept those silent warriors by.

The wood-cock, in his moist retreat,
Heard not the falling of their feet;
On his dark roost the gray owl slept;
Time with his drum the partridge kept,
Nor left the deer his watering-place,
So hushed, so noiseless was their pace.
Soon, partly veiled by bank and tree,
They scann'd the rolling Genesee,
Catching, within his channel'd bed,
Deep blushes from the sunset red,

And, stealing onward, reached a bay
Where light pirogues of white-wood lay,
Fashioned and hollowed out alone
By eating fire and gouge of stone.
Impelled by dip of tapering oar,
Sharp prows receded from the shore,
And, darting through the flashing waves
Afloat with full five hundred braves,
Soon rocked beneath the willows dank
That fringed the green, opposing bank.

VI.

Their leader breathed a low command,
And, guarding against hostile eye,
Their war-canoes were drawn to land,
And hidden in a thicket nigh ;
Then, patiently, each warrior plumed,
With cautious tread, the march resumed.

VII.

Changed are the hills that overbrow
The vale in which those heroes trod,
And, rudely, hind and younker now
Look on their ashes, while the plough
Disturbs the burial-clod ;
And, where those knights of bow and quiver
Paddled across the Pleasant River,
Burning to check in bold advance

The serried chivalry of France,
Over the deep and hurrying tide
Yon red bridge flings its arch of pride.
The forest, many-toned and wide,
Hath vanished from the river-side—
Gone are green roof and leafy screen
Like vapor yester-morning seen ;
Fierce wasting flame and crashing steel
Rang, long ago, its funeral-peal.
Where browsed the elk in other days,
Fat herds in thymy meadows graze ;
Where the fanged cougar, hating day,
Crouched by the deer-lick for his prey,
Heard is the tinkling bell of flocks,
And Ceres binds her wheaten shocks.

VIII.

From waves, once clear as mountain rill,
Where pike and bass the red man speared,
And home his bark by torchlight steered,
The finny tribe have disappeared,
Scared by the clacking mill ;
And, proudly, on the ruined homes
Of perished tribes, stand lordly domes :
But why the light and shade contrast
Of present hour, and clouded past,
While notes of war are on the gale,
And the plot thickens of my tale ?

IX.

The fires of day were fading fast—
A deeper shade the forest cast,
While, through the hallowed place of graves,
Moved a long line of belted braves.
The hand of reverence and love
Had broken the green cope above,
For the red forest tribes believe,

When comes the radiant sunset-time,
The hillocks of the dead receive

Bright visits from the *Better Clime*.
Round each old tomb the paling rude,
From year to year, had been renewed,
And Indian girls had trained the vine,
Amid the pointed stakes, to twine,
And decked each space inclosed with flowers
Culled from the fairest woodland bowers.
Pale, velvet mosses over-crept
Tombs in which maid and mother slept,
And fragile infancy reposed,
A wilding flower untimely closed.

X.

There, mindless of the coming years,
Lay old and venerated seers,
Carved amulets of mystic sway
Commingling with their wasted clay.

On the shagg'd fells of wolf and bear,
The mighty hunter mouldered there,
His favorite hound of courage tried,
And weapons buried by his side.
There, in his mantle richly-furred,
The lord of nations lay interr'd,
Forgetful of his ancient reign,
Couched on proud trophies of the slain;
His name a rousing watchword still,
Weak arm to nerve, faint heart to thrill;
And there, his silver voice untuned,
Forever glazed his falcon eye,
The Cicero of wilds unpruned
Lay crumbling silently,
Lost on the wind, like chaunt of birds,
His passionate and burning words.

XI.

Magnificently robed and crowned
Old oaken monarchs stood around,
And through their boughs, thick-leaved and wide,
The low wind, like a mourner, sighed.
Their gray and patriarchal boles
Consorted well with funeral-knolls
Where slept, in gloom that knows no morn,
The tameless and the forest-born.

XII.

Proud piles and monuments of stone,
Reared in remembrance of the dead,
Befit the sepulchres alone
Of creatures in the city bred ;
But when the Child of Nature dies,
Deep in the howling woodland waste,
The virgin-soil, in which he lies,
By other land-mark should be graced :
Let bark inclose his cold remains ;
By thunder let his knell be rung ;
By warbling birds and pattering rains,
And the low zephyr that complains,
His soft melodious dirge be sung,
With trees about, unshorn and tall,
His columns of memorial.

XIII.

Nigh ashes of the lost and loved,
Old Can-ne-hoot and party moved
With lingering gait and slow ;
And deemed, in every rustling oak,
That voices of the mighty spoke
Of fleet, approaching foe :
Imploring them, in hollow tones,
From outrage to defend their bones ;
Commanding them to keep unstained

The glory by their fathers gained ;
And, deeply, in remembrance bear
That, after death, the brave repair

To happy homes and hunting grounds,
While cowards haunt, beyond the tomb,
A realm of black, unending gloom
Where bitter fruit abounds.

Oh, well did time and place conspire
To light proud souls in wild-wood bred
With sparks of pure, heroic fire

Fann'd from pale ashes of the dead ;
And bring before the mental sight
Departed chiefs, once famed in fight,
With war clubs, *thickly notched*, that told
How mighty were the men of old !

XIV.

Northward the forest grew more blind,
And range of keenest glance confined :
Above, nor strip of welkin blue,
Nor opening in the leafy screen,
For twilight ray to glimmer through,

And cheer the hideous gloom, were seen.
The matted underwood below
Seemed haunt, alone, of reptile foe,
And briar-rose and bramble tall
Threw up a vegetable wall.

XV.

Long, sylvan colonnades around,
Ranged dimly on the forest-floor,
By capitals of umbrage crowned,
 A mighty canopy upbore;
And vines, that arched from tree to tree,
Increased the dread obscurity.
There often, in the mid-day light,
Would hoot the feathered anchorite,
And the dull bat, his neighbor meet,
Air with thin, volant membrane beat:
There, though effulgent morning reigned,
The little Katy-did complained,
And the lone *muk-a-wiss* was heard,
That solemn and prophetic bird,
Outpouring a melodious hymn
Beneath the shade of leaf and limb.

XVI.

It was a place by nature formed
 For the brown Indian to abide,
With heart by love of country warmed,
 The billows of the battle-tide;
And *there*, beneath a dun arcade,
Halt by the Senecas was made.
Picked men were sent to watch the course,
And movements of the hostile force;

And by their chieftain charged to wile,
From glade and thinly wooded plain,
Both fiery Frank and Huron vile,
And with them artfully, the while,
A rapid, running fight maintain,
Till their close ranks, too late to pause,
And their lost vantage ground regain,
Were trapp'd in grim Destruction's jaws !

XVII.

Posts, by the leader, were assigned
To the main body left behind :
Their practiced ears the signal caught,
And gliding, noiseless as the snake,
Each savage form a cover sought
In brambly copse and tufted brake,
Save the hawk-eyed and nimble spy,
Who, stationed in a tree-top high
That towered above the grove profound,
Was charged to mock the wolf's long howl
If aught, like foe, was seen to prowl
Their hiding place around.

XVIII.

The muster at war's savage call
Of Senecas in Council Hall ;
Dismaying scene, and martial rite
Mingled with voices of affright ;

Mad circling dance, mid shriek and yell,
As if Arch Fiend was working spell ;
Mock strife in which fierce howls of rage
Were loud as roar when hosts engage ;
The march, in long and ordered line,
Of warriors watching leader's sign ;
And craft wherewith, in thicket dread,
Snare for invading feet is spread—
Too long, from Blanche and Wun-nut-hay,
Have errant bard detained away.

XIX.

Romantic was the leafy bower,
Impervious to sun and shower,
By the young exile for his bride
Wove deftly near his cabin-side.
The roving linnet, for a perch
Screened from the noontide glare, in search,
Or butterfly, on gaudy wing,
Fatigued with restless wandering,
Above could not an entrance find,
So closely were the branches twined.
Detached by winds, that murmured through
The lattice-work impearled with dew,
Fell blossoms, whiter far than snow,
On the green, mossy floor below,
From thorn and wild plum, for the feet
Of the sweet minstrel carpet meet,

Whose voice, attuned to mournful key,
Filled the bright haunt with melody.

XX.

H Y M N.

1.

Father!—with pale hands uplifted,
Hear thy wandering child implore
That the cloud of wo be rifted,
And the light poured in once more!
On Life's rose the wasting canker
Early hath impressed its mark;
Where, oh where can safely anchor
Sorrow's frail and shattered bark?

2.

Once, around my pillow brightly,
From thy throne fell radiant gleams—
Now, dim shapes of evil nightly
Fill with misery my dreams.
While I start and tremble, fearing
That Hope's star will never dawn,
In mine ear a voice of cheering
Whispers—'*bear and struggle on!*'

3.

“Child!—though dark affliction ever
Wakes a serpent in thy breast,

And thy foot, aweary, never
Finds on earth a home of rest,
Robed in loveliness supernal,
Filled with joy's undying song,
Mansions, many and eternal,
To thy Father's house belong !”

XXI.

No melancholy voice, or sound,
Breathing of anguish and despair,
From sunny forest-aisles around,
On passing wind, was wafted there.
The cascade, darting down the hill,
And prattle of the vagrant rill ;
Exhilarating chaunt of bird,
And squirrel's gleesome bark were heard,
While vocal leaf and waving spray
Joined in a summer roundelay.

XXII.

The clear, bright azure of the sky,
Dappled with cloudy bars of white—
Groves tossing their green plumes on high,
And flowers of deep, but varied dye,
Unfolding in the golden light,
And luring, from their waxen cells,
Bees to their nectar'd cups and bells,
Were breathing ministers of gladness,

Rebuking discontent and sadness:
But mindless of sweet sights and sounds—
Refreshing balm of bud and flower,
Sate Blanche within the leafy bounds
Of her romantic bower,
And by her side the forest maid
Enjoyed the cool and grateful shade.

XXIII.

“While the Great Spirit, from above,
Looks down upon the world in love,
And golden skies o’er all things bend,
Why, daughter of the distant land!”
Said Wun-nut-hay, her dusky friend,
“Press on thy brow that lily-hand?
Why is thy heart the home of sighs,
Of briny drops thy mournful eyes?
List!—while heroic tale of old,
To wean thee from sad thought, is told!”

XXIV.

ON-NO-LEE.

[A LEGEND OF THE CANADICE.]

A beautiful lake is the Canadice,
And wild fowl dream on its breast unscared;
Thy golden brooch, of costly price,
Is dim with its radiant wave compared.

Edged by a broad and silvery belt
Of pebbles bright, and glittering sand,
The waters into music melt
When breaking on the strand;
And its glimmering sheet of azure lies
Unvexed by loud and warring blast,
For green old hills, that round it rise,
Fence this fair mirror of the skies
From storms that journey past.

xxv.

A beautiful lake is the Canadice,
And warblings from its bosom clear
Go up by moonlight, and entice.
The hunter to pause and hear.
Oh! mournful are the tones and low,
Like the mystic voice of the whip-po-wil,
When evening winds through the forest blow,
And other birds are still.
Ear never heard a sadder strain,
In the time of frost and falling leaves,
When brown and naked woods complain,
And the brook, late fed by summer rain,
For perished verdure grieves.

xxvi.

A beautiful lake is the Canadice,
And tribesmen dwelt on its banks of yore,

But an hundred years have vanished thrice
Since hearth-stones smoked upon the shore :
The Munsee dreamed not of a foe ;
Unstrung were the warrior's arm and brow ;
And, couched on skins, he little thought
The fall of his nation was at hand :
His ear no rattle of serpent caught,
No gliding ghost a warning brought
While came the Mengwe band.
Too late—too late to fight or fly
Was rang the knell of his ancient power ;
His lip pealed forth no rallying cry,
From slumber he only woke to die
At the solemn midnight hour.
In gore his household-gods were drenched,
His altar-fires in gore were quenched ;
The wail of babe in blood was choked,
In blood his burial-place was soaked,
And, lighting up the midnight-heaven,
To flame were the huts of his people given.

XXVII.

Though tall oaks fell in their kingly pride,
The conqueror saved a trembling leaf ;
Of that little clan all darkly dyed
Save On-no-lee, the cherished bride
Of their brave but luckless chief.
Morn dawned upon a frightful scene—

The Canadice in sunshine lay ;
But blood was on its margin green—
A tribe was swept away.
On the blackened site of a town destroyed,
The raven a goodly meal enjoyed,
And the wolf called forth her whelps, to share
That banquet red, from her gloomy lair.

XXVIII.

Morn dawned—and on their homeward track
The Mengwe, flushed with conquest, sped,
And, a far-famed leader, Mic-ki-nac,
That band of spoilers led.
To the red belt, his waist around,
The hapless On-no-lee was bound ;
Spared from the death-doom of her race,
The pomp of his return to grace,
And live the slave of one who bore
The scalp of her fallen Sagamore.

XXIX.

At noon, to snatch a light repast,
The party halted in the shade ;
But On-no-lee broke not her fast,
And in the dust, with loathing cast,
The food before her laid.
Oh ! woman wronged, within her soul
Feels fire flash up that mocks control,

When the ruthless fiend, to whom she owes
The fearful sum of her blasting woes,
Is yielded up her prey by Fate,
And the dagger is nigh to second hate !

xxx.

Mic-ki-nac sat on a fallen tree,
And of savory *no-ke-hike* partook,
And by his side was On-no-lee,
Survivor of the butchery,
Who eyed his knife with an eager look.
Round the haft her fingers lightly wreathed,
The glittering weapon she unsheathed—
One well-aimed blow, and she was free !
Another,—and the purple tide
Gushed from her savage captor's side
Who leaped like a wounded stag, and died.

xxxI.

Thunder, without a cloud in sight,
Or whisper of warning on the gale,
Could not have roused more wild affright,
Amid his braves, than deed of might
Wrought by a hand so frail !
Ere they recovered from the shock
Fled On-no-lee like hunted deer ;
Glen, stream and interposing rock
Barred not her swift career :

A vigor never felt before,
The form of the fugitive upbore,
And to her active foot gave wing,
Though fleet were the blood-hounds following.

XXXII.

In vain the foremost runner strained,
And arrows launched from his twanging bow,
For On-no-lee, exulting, gained
A cliff, beyond the reach of foe,
That beetled over the lake below.
Last of her race, with desperate eye—
On the ruined home of her tribe she gazed ;
Waved her avenging arm on high,—
Taunted her baffled enemy,
And a ringing scream of triumph raised—
“Base, worrying curs!—go back, go back,
My scalp is saved from Mengwe smoke !
Go hence, and look for Mic-ki-nac—
The famished crow, and the raven black
A dirge above him croak !”
Regardless of the whizzing storm
Of missiles raining round her form,
Imploring eye she then upcast,
And a low, mournful death-hymn sang :
On hill and forest looked her last,
Once glance upon the water cast,
And from that high rock sprang.

XXXIII.

Away three hundred years have flown
Since the Munsee found a watery grave;
But when old Night is on her throne,
And stars troop forth her sway to own,
Rise warblings from the wave:
And a shadowy face of mournful mien,
With locks all draggled by the surge,
Belated wanderers have seen
From the glittering lake emerge—
One moment float in moonlight fair,
Then mix with the waters, or vanish in air.”

XXXIV.

Ere Blanche could Wun-nut-hay reward
With one approving smile or word,
A muffled tread upon the sward,
And sound of parting boughs she heard:
Upspringing, with a joyous cry,
She deemed her gallant husband nigh;
An instant more,—and in her mien
Fear’s paralyzing power was seen;
All color vanished from her cheek,
Her lips were locked, and could not speak:
Back was her head in horror thrown—
Her form all motionless like stone:
Whence came the spell that bound her frame,

And hushed, half-breathed, a loved one's name ?
What saw she ?—

Through the flowery wall
Of her vine-woven forest hall,
A dark, vindictive visage peered,
With paint, denoting war, besmeared.
Not well could eloquence have framed
The language by that look proclaimed :
It told of prize, long sought, at last
In hard, unyielding clutches fast—
Of pleasure such as panthers feel,
Though longing for a bloody meal,
When hunted down their prey ;
For glared keen eye-balls with a joy
That would caress, and then destroy
Though hunger chid delay.

xxxv.

A *something*, in that hideous face,
Could Blanche of one remembered trace ;
For the clear outlines, full and bold,
Less of the red, than white man told ;
And its fixed look of glad surprise,
Despite of barbarous disguise,
Announced that she was known full well,
Plainly as word could syllable.

XXXVI.

As howls the wood-wolf to his pack
When some fair doe rewards his search,
And the far hills give answer back,
Scaring the wild-bird from her perch—
So did that man of evil eye
Out-pour one long, loud signal-cry,
To which the groves replied in tone
As fierce and startling as his own.
Roused was the lady by the sound,
And Wun-nut-hay looked wildly round
For outlet of escape in vain :
Dark forms, in Huron garb bedight,
Like serpents glided into sight,
 And bound with thongs the twain.
The party, with their scowling chief,
Held hurried conference and brief
 In harsh and guttural tone ;
Then left the violated bower
Like men, in dread of hostile power,
 Who trust to speed alone.

END OF CANTO FOURTH.

YONNONDIO.

CANTO FIFTH.

THE RESCUE.

Mourn for the lovely cabin-home that smiled
On the dim borders of the forest old !
Changed to a scene of desolation wild,
Its arbor, walls and portico, behold !
Though faint the mark of footprints on the mould,
Fearless and fleet avenger will pursue
While shadowy Night comes down on wave and
wold :—

For captive made, by fell, marauding crew,
Is one more dear than life—his partner fond and true !

I.

Eastward the spoilers held their way,
And when the forest-edge was won,
Shone on green leaf and waving spray,

A glare more lurid than the ray
Of red, descending sun.

Poor Blanche threw back one parting gaze,
Her cottage-home was in a blaze ;
Thick smoke hung round it like a pall,
Fire darted out from roof and wall ;
Black cinders on her arbor fell,
Fierce flames rang out a crackling knell ;
Vines, trained above the porch to meet,
Were fast consuming in the heat ;
And clustering rose-trees, taught to shade

The windows by her fingers fair,
With wooing winds no longer played
In green and crimson robe array'd,
By the hot breath of ruin made

Black, verdureless and bare :
And birds that she had lured away
From lone, deep haunts in forest gray,
To hop unscared around her door—

From that ill-fated dwelling fled,
As if they knew the hand that fed
Could fling them crumbs no more.

II.

Soon was the burning wreck from view
Veiled by dark, interposing trees ;
But well, too well the lady knew
By voices on the passing breeze—

A sullen crash—a muffled din—
That the loved roof was tumbling in,
Burying, in its timeless fall,
Full many a sad memorial,
And token dear of other hours
When fell her fairy foot on flowers.

III.

Fiends who had fired that sylvan cot,
Letters and books regarded not,
But rudely bore alone from thence,
Toys that they deemed of consequence :
While the prized wardrobe of her child,
Whose lonely grave was in the wild—
Home missives, from the camp in haste,
By her old, warlike father traced,
Before his heart became a waste ;
And, lastly, than all cherished things
More precious in her wanderings,
The Bible by a mother given
When Earth about to quit for Heaven,
Dissolved in flame, while wanton gale
Scattered abroad their ashes pale.

IV.

When captives and marauding band
Reached a tall ridge of wooded land
That, eastward, walled the pleasant vale,

Day into glimmering twilight died,
And murmurs from the river-side
Came softened on the gale ;
And Blanche from that commanding height
(Above the tree-tops, far beneath)
Saw vapor rise, more black than night,
From her lost dwelling's blackened site,
In many a mournful wreath.

v.

Onward their course the party urged,
Until they reached a babbling brook,
Then from the beaten trail diverged,
And their way, in shadow merged,
More slowly southward took :
Now on gnarled oak, by hatchet blazed,
The keen eye of some savage gazed ;
Anon the rearmost warrior paused
When heard was some unusual sound
By distant scream of panther caused,
Or dry branch falling to the ground.
The moon in her pale march was far,
And twinkled many a watching star
When a deep dell was gained where sped
Co-ne-sus o'er his pebbly bed—
Bright outlet of that pearl of Lakes
From which a tuneful name it takes,

Rushing to lose its silvery gleam
In the dark River's turbid stream!

VI.

To halt, their leader gave command,
And parleyed with his scowling band,
As if in doubt to steer his course
Down the swift tide, or toward its source;
But an old brave of haughty port,
And glittering eye, debate cut short,
And pointing to the water, flecked
With quivering spots of lunar light,
Said in the Huron dialect—

“Wolves will throng forth to night!
Watch-fires are lit their way to teach
By upland-swell and river-beach;
Their tell-tale runner that we chased,
Howls in their den, and we must haste!”
On the creek's bottom then he strode,
Before his chief, to show the way,
Each bearing in his arms a load—

Sad Blanche and Wun-nut-hay—
While figures gaunt brought up the rear
With watchful eye and open ear.

VII.

Above, the overhanging banks
Were lined by trees in broken ranks,

And moonlight, falling gently down,
Set with rich pearls each emerald crown.
There towered, majestic and old,
The dark-leaved hemlock from the mould,
The spruce, unstirr'd by breath of air,
Shaped like a parasol, was there,
And the huge pine full proudly bore
His honors like a regal thing,
His trunk with mossy velvet hoar,
Fit ermine for so wild a king.

VIII.

A hill once strongly fortified,
Down sloping to the water-side,
Captor and captive hurried by :
Stockade and trench still crowned the place,
Memorials of a vanished race
Whose green, old graves were nigh.
A clearing of uneven ground
Once spread the ruined fortress round,
But mid huge stumps, decayed and black,
Young oaks were springing green and high,
And fast the grove was winning back
Its old supremacy :—
It was a scene of mingling hues,
And not unmeet for BRYANT'S muse,—
That whispered of the dead and gone,
Lovely,—though sad to look upon—

Telling that in the forest's heart,
Like his frail brother of the mart,
Untutored man a structure rears
To long outlast his wasting form,
To stand when round his grave the storm
Hath howled uncounted years.

IX.

Pursuing, in its channel wide,
The silvery windings of the tide,
The party fared a mile or more,
Then forward hurried on the shore.
"If foemen follow, they will find
A watery trail both cold and blind,
Though keen as vultures on the scent!"
Muttered the leader to his crew,
And his breath more freely drew,
Like one relieved from sense of fear,
Deeming black danger, lately near,
No longer imminent.
Where had that voice the lady heard?
A tumult in her heart was stirr'd,
Recalling scenes beyond the main;
Though harsh the tone as raven's croak,
An echo of the past it woke
In her distracted brain.

x.

Long ere the mid hour of the night,
Crossed the dark robbers in their flight
The grassy carpet of a glade,
From which, through bowers of glossy green,
Bright glimpses of the Lake were seen.

On which wan moonlight played.
Plunging in thickets, soon they hied
Without one friendly star to guide,
So dark the cover overhead
Of long-armed butternut, inweaved
With oak and chestnut thickly-leaved,
And evergreen outspread.

Eastward the lake of silver breast,
Beneath a cloudless sky at rest,

A gun-shot from their wood-path lay ;
But, on its beach of whitened sand,
Dreaded a march—that crafty band—
Lest footprint might betray.

xi.

Emerged, at last, each cautious brave
From sylvan labyrinth of gloom,
And low winds, freshened by the wave,
Stirred blanket-fold and eagle-plume :
Again the moonshine brightly fell

On rounded brooch and bead of shell,
On spoiler and his pinioned prey,
From friends, a weary march, away.

XII.

Descending from the higher ground,
Through matted underwood they wound,
And on a tongue of land arrived,

Outstretching far into the *mere*,
An emerald set in crystal clear,
Dotted with oaks whose upright forms
Stern warfare with the wrestling storms
Of ages had survived.

A clump, more ancient than the others—
A group of iron-hearted brothers,
Towered with their trunks of rugged shape
Near the curved margin of the cape :
And underneath their branches gray,
To halt until the dawn of day,

Encamped that predatory horde :
Short was their meal—their only cheer,
Parched maize, and smoke-dried flesh of deer—

Mossed earth their banquet-board.
With flint and steel though well supplied,
Red camp-fire they enkindled not,
Through fear some treach'rous brand might guide
Fierce, wandering Maquas to the spot.

Thirsting for blood, and armed to slay,
While, bound in slumber's thrall, they lay.

XIII.

When broken was their lengthened fast,
The pipe around the circle passed ;
Then, wearied by a march of toil,
And glad their toughened limbs to rest,
All couched them down upon the soil,
As if it was their mother's breast,
Save watchman gaunt who vigil kept
While others in their blankets slept,
And two, upon a fallen tree,
Seated in earnest colloquy :
One that dark man of evil mien
Who first spied Blanche in arbor green,
And Huron who, through forest dim,
In swift retreat had guided him.

XIV.

"My brother now his eye may close,
Safe from assault of roving foes ;
Brown, burrowing moles have keener sight,
And water leaves no trace of flight"—
Growled the old chief—"Enough for them
Like leaves to die on girdled stem ;
For them enough in their despair
To strike the painted battle-post,

While rush, to smoke them in their lair,
Great Yonnondio and his host !
Through brambly wold and swampy ground
It ill becomes a brave to dodge,
Like hunted fox before the hound,
To place yon *White-Rose* in thy lodge,
Winning himself, a stripling's prize,
Her *sister-flower of darker dyes* !
What will my taunting tribesmen say
If I am absent from the fray,
Counting, in scorn before my face,
The scalp-locks of a vanquished race ?
On this gray head will rest disgrace—
Hushed will my voice in council be,
Clouded my name eternally ;—
Speak, brother, speak !”

“ A Huron thou !”

(Exclaimed his comrade in reply,
While gathered gloom upon his brow,)
“ And ask acquittal from a vow
Pledged to another solemnly ?
In other mould I deemed thee cast—
One proving faithful to the last ;—
Thy brother, to his promise true,
Thee and thy warriors will requite
With blankets of a gaudy hue,
And ornaments of silver bright,
Richer than mighty Sagamore

In hall of council ever wore
If guarded on his dangerous trail :—
Ere rise and set four fleeting suns,
Our camping ground will be the vale
Through which the Wy-a-lu-sing runs ;
There waits the friendly Nanticoke
His calumet with us to smoke,
And mats provide of texture fine
On which our tired limbs may recline.”

xv.

“ Hah ! doubting still what course to take,
Thy word redeem, or compact break ?
For answering with stab and yell
The challenge of the sentinel
Who from foul shame an Indian spared,
Mad with deep draughts of liquid fire,
When whip was raised, and back was bared,
By calming Yonnondio’s ire ?
Who bears the name that Frenchmen bore ?
Rememberest thou ? ” “ No more, no more !—
When dusky night is at an end
The Black Fox journeys with his friend ! ”
Then, on the ground with green-sward floored,
Their ancient amity restored,
Stretched their tired limbs, that miscreant pair,
’Till day-break gleamed to slumber there.

XVI.

Apart a temporary tent
Of poles, crotched stakes and branches bent,
Loosely with strips of bark o'er-laid,
For the tired captives had been made ;
And a grim savage, keeping guard,
Its low and narrow entrance barred,
Droning, to keep himself awake,
Rude fragments of some forest tune,
Or looking forth upon the Lake
When shrieked the solitary loon
Amid tall flags and clustering reeds—
A warning that the Indian heeds
Taught truly by tradition old
That storm was in that cry foretold.

XVII.

The wind-swept waters on the shore
Broke with a low, dull, muttering roar
Reflecting back a lurid glare
When lightning lanced the darkened air.
The moon was muffled in a cloud,
Its leafy top the forest bowed,
And, far within its solemn bounds,
Woke dismal moans and creaking sounds.

XVIII.

What shielded Blanche, through trial sore,
And hardships never known before,
From perishing like lily frail
When outraged by the tyrant-gale ?
Reared in a palace o'er the sea,
And daughter of a noble race,
Slight as the blue anemone
Was her light form of Phidian grace ;
And yet, dark ills that well might test
The temper of the sternest breast,
To danger used—to toil inured,
This high-born woman had endured.
Who was that man of evil eye
Whose voice roused buried memory ?
Whence came he with that felon-tread ?
Can shrouded corse forsake its bed ?—
Where was her home—her husband, where ?
Such questions must have nursed despair.

XIX.

Oh ! what a medicine for one,
Whose heart, though rudely torn, aches on,
Is dull, oblivious repose—
A brief unconsciousness of woes ;
The dreary luxury of forgetting
That perils are our path besetting :

And Blanche in sleep forgot awhile
Dark foe with heart of guilt and guile ;
Her forest-home made desolate,
Her infant's grave, and absent mate
Who came not when she shrieked for aid,
When ruffian-hand was on her laid :
Rude was the couch on which she lay,
Of gathered moss and leaves composed,
And by her side was Wun-nut-hay
With brain at work, and eye unclosed.

XX.

Accustomed, when a little child,
To wander with her roving race,
Through the dim alleys of the wild,
From stream to stream, and place to place ;
And, by her forest training, taught
Tasks to perform with peril fraught ;
The reptile in her path to slay ;
By precipice to track her way ;
The rushing hurricane to shun
When its black banner veiled the sun ;
With steady hand her skiff to steer,
Though the dark whirlpool eddied near ;
Or with a firm, unwavering stride
On slippery pole to cross the tide,
Still did that Indian maid possess
A power that conquered weariness.

XXI.

Lone musing on her captive state
Roused old, hereditary hate.
Her mind, with thoughts of freedom, teemed ;
By her, revenge was virtue deemed :
Though woman all, the blood of chiefs
Timed the proud throbbings of her heart,
And grief, beyond all other griefs,
From her own tribe it was to part,
And hear no more On-yit-ha's voice
Salute the maiden of his choice.
All swollen were her pinioned hands ;
Whose work was this—who twined these bands ?
And shall the daughter of the brave
Live in the Huron's lodge, a slave ?
Her fettered hands she tried to free ;
Why from the task desisted she ?

XXII.

Love for the being by her side
Reclining like some faded flower,
On which the dew of even-tide
Exerted no reviving power.
And would she leave her pale-browed friend,
Too weak and travel-worn to fly,
Beneath misfortune's load to bend,
And quaff the cup of misery ?

Again she mused :—a happy thought
Relieved her spirit over-wrought,
Lighting the chambers of her brain—
Perchance On-yit-ha and De Grai,
To rescue them, were on the way,
 With warriors in their train ;
But clouds were curtaining the moon—
Dark, dark would be their pathway soon,
And guiding runner they would need
Through glen and copse the band to lead.

XXIII.

The Huron, charged night-watch to keep,
Betrayed by breathing, long and deep,
That his keen eye was sealed in sleep.
Again, to disengage her hands,
Essayed she from encircling bands ;
And, after many a desperate strain,
Parted the leathern cord in twain.
Then, to unloose her feet, she tried—
In vain ! they were too firmly tied :
Numbed was her deeply-furrowed wrist,
Her skill the knot could not untwist ;
She only tightened more the thong,
More painful made its pressure strong.
And must that young, heroic maid
Thus baffled in high purpose be ?

The slumbering Huron wears a blade,
And in its edge is *liberty*.

XXIV.

While crept she by approaches slow,
With noiseless caution, towards her foe,
No other light revealed his form
Than flashings of the coming storm,
And gleams of moonlight struggling through
Vapor, and clouds of ebon hue.
Softly her moving fingers felt
For sheath, depending from his belt,
And lightly, by her clasping hand,
The weapon's buckhorn-haft was spann'd;
Then forth its bladed steel she drew—
One stroke! the tether fell in two;
But, whispering in the Huron's ear,
Some demon must have hovered near;
For, ere her feet the maiden gained,
An iron grasp her steps detained.

XXV.

An instant flashed the knife on high,
In the red lightning darting by;
The next, within the sentry's breast,
A sheath, from point to hilt, it found—
Heaved, with convulsive throe, his chest,
While crimson spouted from the wound:

His powerless hand relaxed its hold,
Thrilled to his heart a shudder cold;
Frothy his quivering lips became;
To earth sank heavily his frame;
A filmy veil his eye closed o'er—
One groan! the strong man was no more.

XXVI.

Gripping the bloody weapon fast,
Alive to every wandering sound,
A hurried glance the maiden cast
The shadowy encampment round.
Witless, dreamed on the robber-band,
Of brother slain by woman's hand;
No warrior in his blanket stirr'd—
Waves, wrangling with the rocks, she heard;
And sang the blast, old oaks amid,
Mournful at times, and wild by starts,
As if unhappy fiends lay hid
 Within their knotty hearts:
Streaming in agitated air,
Waved, in loose flakes, her unbound hair,
While lambent and electric light
By fits revealed the Lake to sight,
Giving the surge a fiery crest,
And chasing darkness from its breast.

XXVII.

Treading upon the grassy sod,
As if her foot with moss was shod,
Fled, on her errand, Wun-nut-hay ;
Nor paused to list, or look behind,
While groves of outline undefined

Before her darkly lay :

Boldly she plunged their depths within,
Though thorns pierced through her moccasin,
And the black clouds, unsealed at last,
Discharged their contents, thick and fast,
Drenching her locks and vesture slight,
And blinding with large drops her sight.

XXVIII.

The grisly wolf was on the tramp
To gain the cover of his lair ;
Fierce eyes glared on her from the swamp,
As if they asked her errand there.

The feathered hermit of the dell
Flew hooting to his oaken cell,
And grape-vines, tied in leafy coil
To gray-armed giants of the soil,
Swung like a vessel's loosened shrouds
Drifting beneath a bank of clouds.
From the pine's huge and quaking cone,
Came sobbing and unearthly tone,

While trunks decayed, of measure vast,
Fought for the last time with the blast,
And near her fell with crashing roar
That shook the cumbered forest-floor :

XXIX.

But hurried on the forest-child,
Though night and tempest in the wild
Engendered sights and sounds of fear ;
And not one star of friendly ray
Her dismal and her dangerous way
Looked softly forth to cheer.
Passing through brake and watery fen,
Unharm'd she reached the woody glen,
Through which the swift Conesus winds,
And the blue lake an outlet finds.

XXX.

Weary with flight, her agile form
Against a hemlock-stem she leaned,
From the rude buffet of the storm
By overhanging foliage screened :
She tarried there till ceased the rain,
Till moonshine silvered Night again,
And the hoarse clarion of the gale
Changed its high note to dying wail ;
Then, freshened by a little rest,
Adventuring forth upon her quest,

Along the creek's green marge she sped ;
And water-drops the grove shook down,
When air-gusts waved the branches brown,
On her unsheltered head.

A wary glance around she threw
When loomed the ruined Fort to view ;
Taught, by the legends of her race,
That haunted was the quiet place
By vapory phantoms of the dead,
Earth echoless beneath their tread,
Stalking, with fixed and freezing gaze,
'Mid mouldering wrecks of other days.

xxxI.

When nigh the scene where, full of wile,
The Huron band held parle awhile,
And their trail ended in the tide,
A sound, like mimicked bleat of deer,
Came wafted to her practiced ear

From the glen's northern side.
The valley, from its depths of shade,
Prompt answer to the signal made :
Brush cracked beneath the tread of feet ;
And a dark group of belted men,
Led by a chieftain tall and fleet,
Gathered within the glen.

xxxii.

There was an open glade of green
The northern bank and wave between,
And, in its moonlit centre, stood
These martial rangers of the wood,
Impatient, while compell'd to halt,
Like hounds, in chase of game, at fault :
One form the maiden would have known
Disguised in raiment not his own ;
But the long plume of raven hue,
And wampum-sash, full well she knew.

xxxiii.

Emerging from the thicket dim,
New vigor braced her failing limb,
And scarce her foot the herbage brushed,
While to On-yit-ha's arms she rushed.
Her sudden presence wonder woke,
And from the band an outcry broke—
Half doubting evidence of sight ;
Deeming that phantom of the night
Alone would be abroad, to scour
So wild a dell, at such an hour :
But who is he, of manly frame,
Wan visage, and dishevel'd hair,
Whose trembling, whitened lips exclaim,

"Where is my Blanche? oh! tell me, where?"

One who would fain throw life away,
The houseless, wretched, wronged De Grai;
But hope on his bruised heart shed rays
Like moonlight glimmering through the haze;
And his cheek lost its ghastly shade,
When told her tale that Indian-maid;
Recounting, with a graphic power,
The capture in his lady's bower,
Sad conflagration of the cot,
War paint, and costume of the foe—
Their swift departure from the spot,
Dreading the twang of hostile bow.

XXXIV.

She well portrayed the course they took
Through dark morass, up channelled brook,
Until they reached their camping-ground—
Lone lake in front—the woods around:
Their caution in not kindling fires,
Fearful they might prove funeral-pyres;
Then drawing forth, yet red with strife,
From underneath her robe, a knife,
Narrated she, in modest phrase,
The daring nature of the deed
By which her prisoned limbs she freed—
The waking sentry's iron grasp,
His instant fall, and dying gasp,
While stern lips murmured praise.

XXXV.

“ On!—we will end the bloody task
A woman hath so well begun ;
Nor shall this brood of adders bask
Unharm'd beneath to-morrow's sun :
The Night Hawk will not fold his wings
Until he robs them of their stings,
And the pale chief, from o'er the main,
Looks on his stolen one again,
And listens, while she fills his ear
With music that he loves to hear.”
By hand on weapon fiercely laid,
And frowning brow, and flashing eye,
Each warrior to his leader made
A meaning, though a mute reply.
Bounding with long and measured lope,
Under the green woods' leafy cope,
On-yit-ha urged his warriors on :
De Grai moved swiftly by his side,
And near was Wun-nut-hay, their guide,
Tripping like startled fawn.

XXXVI.

How sweetly fell the wan moonlight
Upon the Huron camp that night,
When the wild storm, its fury spent,
Undarkened left the firmament !

How pleasantly the moonbeam shone
When died away the thunder-groan,
And waves, in wrath that lately heaved,
A glory from its light received ;
While forest on the shore, and hill,
Were imaged in the water still,
And vine and flower, that grew about,
Gemmed by the rain, gave fragrance out !

XXXVII.

Made restless by his dampened bed,
A waking warrior raised his head ;
Then, rising slowly to his feet,
Looked on the Lake's unruffled sheet ;
Bright dimple on earth's chequered face,
A radiant pearl in emerald vase,
And mirror meet for Naiad fair
To look on when she plaits her hair !
It lay a type of holy rest,
And primal freshness wrapped its breast ;
Its surface, smooth as polished steel,
Ploughed never by the wandering keel,
Wind, water-fowl and falling shower
Its playmates since creation's hour.

XXXVIII.

So picturesque, so calm a view,
Beneath June-skies of cloudless blue,

By tranquil charm might well have curbed
The tumult of a soul disturbed ;
And yet that lonely warrior stood,
With folded arms, in murky mood.
Nervous at times, and scared he seemed
As if of evil he had dreamed ;
In sleep some drear fore-warning heard,
Dark curse, or death-denouncing word ;
And ill his eye of savage glare
Comported with a scene so fair.

XXXIX.

He muttered low :—" what leaden weight
Rests heavy on my heart of late ?
Have I not reason to rejoice
In spite of that strange, mocking voice
That whispered in mine ear of doom,
Winged death-shot, and dishonored tomb ?
Though black cloud lower, or day-beam shine,
The guerdon of revenge is mine ;
I loved her, aye ! adored her long,
Her name the burden of my song :
Though scornful the return I met,
Some *old affection* lingers yet,
A *faded flower* in desert sand,
Once a green isle of Fairy-Land.
Her frown chased sunshine from my day,
A rival bore the prize away ;

She spurned me with forbidding brow;
That proud one is my captive now !”

XL.

He mused awhile, and thus resumed ;
“ Ha ! warned again that I am doomed,
That guilt hath fearful recompense ?
Off, juggling fiend ! false demon, hence !
Though life be nearing fast the goal,
Vengeance shall first appease my soul.
Her beauty fires my brain no more,
Albeit 'twas otherwise of yore.
Up, from my heart's most secret cells,
A fount of bitter water wells ;
Hope light it not, with moonlight beam,
As naptha burns upon the stream ;
Its black and troubled current knows
No quiet ebb, but ever flows ;
In me the future wakes no fear—
A Hell of pain I suffer here,
And, when my vengeance is complete,
I pray this pulse may cease to beat !

XLI.

“ Her sire, the Baron gray and old,
Will never more his child behold ;
And yet he was my patron erst,
Taught me the game of battle first,

For better trump and pawing barb,
Than crucifix and priestly garb !
He led me from a hovel dim,
The wine of joy to quaff with him ;
But ever, in his lordly hall,
Between us interposed a wall :
We never met on equal terms,
Though both were perishable worms ;
Bells rang gay peal when *he* was born—
In rags I first beheld the morn ;
Of down *his* cradle-couch was made—
On straw my infant limbs were laid ;
But I was proud—nor could I brook,
At times, his frigid, stately look
That seemed to say—‘ forget not, boy,
The past in your intemperate joy !’
Fool !—did he deem me tutored hound
Who yields the quarry up, when found ?
A jackal who the lion guides
Where the sleek antelope abides,
Enjoying not the fruits of toil,
While power appropriates the spoil ?
From swooping hawk may tear away
The partridge, and its haunt regain ;
Fast hold have eagles on their prey—
Their talons never clutch in vain.”

XLII.

The moon went down :—while others slept,
That wretched man his station kept ;
Eastward his blood-shot eye he turned,
And sign of coming day discerned—
Faint purple streaked night's azure arch ;
“ Up, and away upon our march
We must be, ere the sun,” he said,
“ Or danger in our rear may tread !”

XLIII.

Low sounds crept on the dusky air,
Nor tread of wolf—nor tramp of bear ;
There was a rustling 'mid the trees,
And yet there was no wandering breeze,
Noise as of leaf, or mouldering root
Yielding beneath a cautious foot.
Roused from his revery, he strove
To pierce the shadows of the grove ;
Once more a half-hushed trampling came,
A boding tremor shook his frame ;
“ Am I deceived, or scan aright ?
Dim figures meet my line of sight—
Stand !—who goes there ?” he sharply cried—
A carbine flashed—a yell replied !
Well done, bold cavalier of France,
Deadly thine aim, and keen thy glance !

The wrongs of Blanche, in captive bands,
Claimed stern requital at thy hands ;
True was that bullet's airy track—
The wounded warrior staggered back ;
To shout defiance he essayed,
But hoarse and hollow murmur made.
A voice, once heard where sabres crossed,
Its full, clear thunder-tone had lost ;
Numbed was an arm whose might alone,
Through serried ranks, red swath had mown,
While knightly forms shrank back dismayed
By flashes of his fatal blade.

XLIV.

From leafy couch his Hurons sprang,
As if each felt an adder's fang ;
Their weapons grasped in disarray,
While bounding from their cover rushed
Avengers, panting for the fray,
Like some mad whirlwind on its way
When oak is rent and rock is crushed.

XLV.

Fighting the battle of despair,
His tomahawk the Black Fox swung ;
And, quavering on the troubled air,
The war-whoop of On-yit-ha rung.
Savage the conflict was, though brief :—

Covered with gore, the Huron Chief
Fought, with his back against an oak,
While hand could deal the hatchet-stroke.
Well did that hoary brave maintain
Renown achieved in many a fight—
His fall, encircled by the slain,
To his thinned band was sign of flight.

XLVI.

They scattered, in bewildering fear,
As flee a broken herd of deer :
Foes that knew not the word '*forgive*,'
Followed each panting fugitive.
The narrow cape debarred retreat ;
Some, near the shore, to earth were beat ;
Others swam out into the lake,
But Indian cunning marked their wake ;
Like otters plunged they down in vain ;
The bubbling surface caught a stain,
Unerring witness to the skill
Of marksmen trained such game to kill.

XLVII.

Through *golden* portals looked the sun
On fragments of a battle won ;
Hushed was the frightful noise of route,
Wild death-scream, and triumphant shout :
Quiet and calm the forest lord

Lay on the dark, discolored sward,
Or rested in wet, reedy grave,
 Frighting far off the screaming gull,
The gallant scalp-lock of the brave
 Torn from each grim, denuded skull :
The blue-lipped wave stole up the beach,
Its red, polluted sand to bleach ;
Breathing a low and whispered moan,
A sad, mysterious undertone,
As if *it* bore a *heart*, and sighed
For *those* who in that strife had died.

XLVIII.

Thrice happy, re-united pair !
 Why paint the locked embrace of love ?
Enough that, from entangling snare,
 Flew to her mate a sinless dove ;
While, by his own black net-work bound,
The wily fowler bit the ground.

END OF CANTO FIFTH.

YONNONDIO.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE BATTLE.

Fair was the dawn of that eventful day,
By conflict ever memorable made,
Between trained troops, who owned the Bourbon's
sway,

And Nature's dauntless children of the shade
Near Avon's pleasant site :—yon River strayed
Through a green, quiet landscape, and the light,
New-born and blushing, on the water played :
Nought token gave that scene so hushed and bright
Would soon ring far and wide, with the wild roar
of fight.

Alas ! man's heart, like the sequestered vale,
Peaceful at morn, that rang ere noon with yell,
Loud gun-shot, charging cheer and dying wail,
Is often thrilling to its inmost cell
With happiness one hour before the bell
Of black misfortune tolls ; while Hope in tears

Breathes, on the troubled air, her sad farewell,
And hollow Friendship closely stops his ears
To sorrow's moan, and Hate his viper-crest uprears.

I.

Hemmed in by trees of Titan height,
In waveless rest, Autaugua lay,
While wavering gleams of rosy light
Announced the birth of day :
Dawn flushed the mist that overspread
The waters in their reedy bed,
Giving each cloud-fold, thin and gray,
A radiant wing to flee away.
Along the low and marshy edge,
His neck outstretched above the sedge,
Wandered the shy and lonely crane,
Lord of a sombre, wet domain :
From muddy den, with flag-leaf lined,
The musk-rat stole, repast to find ;
Wild pigeons, early on the wing,
Woke overhead low thundering—
Blue, rearward columns mounting high,
Scared by the gray hawk's greedy cry.

II.

Ruins of former forests round
Were heaped in spongy, mouldering piles

On which the snake his coil unwound,
Or charmed the bird by fatal wiles :
Flapping of water-fowl, the plunge
Of leaping bass and mascalunge ;
The blue kingfisher's eager scream,
Watching the wake of perch, or bream ;
White swan, with oary feet afloat,
Raising a full, clear trumpet-note,
Were sounds in keeping with a view
As yet unchanged by axe and fire,
That wore, when earth was fresh and new,
The same dark, picturesque attire.

III.

Away, an arrow's flight, the Pond,
Like subject dutiful and fond,
The deep and rushing River gave
A turbid, tributary wave.
Beyond the belt of wood that threw
On its dull sheet a darker hue,
Broad, level fields of tasseled corn
Lay lovely in the light of morn ;
But horse and foot were on the march,
Beneath the greenwood's leafy arch,
To rudely break, in bannered pride,
The quiet of that prospect wide.

IV.

Gaunt red men, in light hunting shirts,
 Stained like the grass and leaves around them,
Crouched in the brambly forest-skirts,
 As if a spell of witchcraft bound them.
The pheasant scratched, where sunshine warmed
A patch of forest earth, unharmed ;
The marmot, near his burrow deep,
Played on the sward with clumsy leap ;
Ungalled, by shaft from toughened bow,
Coursed on their runway buck and doe ;
And, by Autaugua's reedy shores,
 A brotherhood of beavers wise
Protruded, from their hovel-doors,
 Brown furry heads with staring eyes.

V.

For other game those hunters true
Withheld the shot and loud halloo !
Abiding patiently the hour
When each might prove his skill and power ;
While keeping watch for *nobler* prey,
All dumb and motionless were they,
Like figures carved from granite gray.
Time, when an Indian warrior lies
In ambush, unregarded flies :
Though morning lark and whipporwil

Find him a voiceless watcher still,
Unwearied, in their sockets, roll
His black and ever-open orbs,
While the deep vortex of his soul
Alone one *vengeful thought* absorbs.
Though thirst oppress, and hunger gnaw,
Wo to the brave who quits his post !
The rigid doom of forest law
Degrades him with the name of *squaw*,
And Heaven rejects his ghost.

VI.

While under cover, thick and green,
Those hidden spies kept look-out keen,
Their foemen, with extended flank,
Were marching on the river-bank.
The morning star had seen them rise,
By bugle warned, their tents to strike,
And form, alert for high emprise,
With arquebuse and bristling pike :
Their trained battalions, ere the rays
Of rising sun dispelled the haze
That wrapped the woodland, leaf and limb,
In winding sheet obscure and dim,
Forded the rapid Hon-e-oye :
Dark allies hovered in advance
To guard the regulars of France
From Seneca decoy.

There his swart tribe the Saukie led,
Proud of the hawk-plumes on his head ;
There stalked the Huron armed to slay,
And cross upon his bosom bore,
Taught by the Jesuit to pray
With hand imbrued in human gore ;
There was the Adumdack seen,
Like his own hills of iron mien ;
Half-naked, fierce and wampum-decked,
By marshal discipline unchecked,
The fleet Ottawa glided there,
Drest in the spoils of wolf and bear.

VII.

It must have been a gallant show,
When sunlight reached the valley low,
Made by those well-appointed troops :
Their glancing arms, half seen, half hid,
While moving, at quick time, amid
Tall trees in columned groups.
Borne in that host were banners old
By veterans "all seamed with scars,"
With conquest written on each fold,
And marked by shot of former wars :
Whose wings at Steenkirk, on the blast,
Had flapped when blood ran warm and fast ;
Banners which haughtily had streamed
When Luxemburg in armor gleamed,

Leading, with trenchant sabre drawn,
The whirlwind of the battle on.

VIII.

Of proven valor was the chief,
And worthy of the laurel leaf,
Who led that chivalrous array ;
His steed, adorned with harness bright,
He managed like a youthful knight,

Although his head was gray.

Behind him pranced a mounted guard
Of men at arms, with visors barred—
Beneath *him*, in command alone,
Rode a tall warrior by his side ;
And much of trouble had he known,
Unless soured look, and cheerless tone,

The heart within belied.

A few stray locks of glistening snow
Fell his bruised morion below,
But wintry age had left untamed
An eye, at times, that fiercely flamed ;
And though his leader on parade
Would nobler chevalier have made,
Still his broad chest and martial front,
Bronzed o'er by toil, and weather-stain,
Told plainly that it was his wont
To bide the roaring onset's brunt
Upon the battle-plain.

XI.

“Twice, Baron, has the tedious night
Been reddened by our watch-fires bright;
Twice has the morning sunbeam found
Our force afoot on hostile ground,
And nothing in the shape of foe
Has brandished axe, or bended bow”—
Murmured De Nonville, in disdain,
Stroking his courser’s flowing mane.
“The rich, green forests of a land,
So beautiful on every hand,
Diversified by upland-swell,
Bright leaping rill, and flowery dell;
Another race, methought, possessed
Than these dark Senecas, misnamed
The tawny Romans of the west!”—
The stern, old warrior exclaimed.

X.

“Curse that false Jesuit”—rejoined
The fiery Marquis—“who has coined
A lying tale for knightly ears
Of On-gui-hon-wi pride and power!
Their hunting-grounds a Frank might scour,
And find no foe in wood or bower,
Though marked was every leaf and flower

With one good plump of spears.”
“ I marvel what detains De Lisle,
That man half-soldier, and half-priest !
He comes not, and the sun, meanwhile,
Looks from his watch-tower in the east.
My orders were, ere break of day,
That back he should retrace his way,
And at head-quarters make report
Of trail the most direct, whereby
Our vanguard might surprise a Fort
The Big-Bend of yon river nigh.

XI.

“ Attended, or alone to scout
Forth went he in our line of route ?”
“ Through fear of ambuscade at hand,
With him he took, by my command,
The crafty Black Fox and his band”—
Answered the Baron, while a cloud
Darkened the brow it overspread
In furrows by affliction ploughed,
And with a stifled groan he bowed,
In agonizing thought, his head.
Ah ! wildly were his heart-strings torn !
Hope had he cherished on that morn
To look upon the *lost* restored—
His fair-haired Blanche, the long-deplored !
Last scion of an honored race,

And once more in her features trace
A transcript of that mother's face
Who died in giving birth to her,
Whose dwelling was the sepulchre.

XII.

Promise the Jesuit had made,
With hand on cross devoutly laid,
To die, or with his child return
Ere morning dried Night's dewy urn :
That hour was passed :—why tarried he ?
Nought save low breeze, and rustling tree,
Dull, measured tramp of column long,
Loud oath, rude jest, and losel song,
Clangor of mail, and sabre's ring
Replied to his self-questioning.

XIII.

When the long line, from forest gray,
Debouched in glittering array,
And, with a lighter movement, trod
Green floors of fresh, unshadowed sod,
Stretching away to groves unhewn
Autaugua round, that dark Lagoon!
Well might their general declare,
Eye never looked on vale more fair.
Wind wafted fragrance, and his steed
Sank, fetlock-deep, in beds of flowers ;

Brooks wimpled by, in playful speed,
And ancient pines beyond the mead,
Reared their dark, emerald towers.

XIV.

“ By Jesuit though falsely told,
Broad valley! that thy sons were bold,
A truth was uttered when he said
Thy breast an Eden lay outspread—
That spoken word would ill express
Thy pure, primeval loveliness!
Here, should the lilies o’er the brave
Float while yon river rolls a wave—
Here, knees in homage should be bent
To Louis, the magnificent!
In spite of armies hither led,
Bearing aloft the Cross of Red,
Though howled, like wolves upon the track,
The Five Leagued Nations at their back!”
Thus, curbing in his war-horse fleet,
While his heroic soul was tuned
To rapture by that vision sweet,
De Nonville with himself communed.

XV.

In forest warfare better taught,
A shaded trail his allies sought,
Where twilight held unquestioned reign,

Avoiding flat, and open plain.
Limber in motion as the snake,
Oft would some scout thick-top of tree
His screened observatory make,
And look forth, long and patiently.
No object round was too minute
For their keen, critical survey ;
Their organs, practiced and acute,
Marked grassy blade and waving spray ;
Each starry moss-tuft on the stone,
Each leaf about by air-gust blown.
Cautious their progress was, and slow,
Hunting for sign of hidden foe ;
Heeding the squirrel's frolic bark,
The wood-worm's tick, in crevice dark,
Or close to earth applying ear,
Better some far-off sound to hear.

xvi.

Southward the gleaming ranks moved on
Across a flower-enamelled lawn,
Their weapons flashing in the light,
Dark Genesee upon their right,
Gliding along, with even flow,
To join the blue Ontario.
Distant a crow's flight, darkly towered,
Upon the left, a ridge of hills,

In waving groves of oak embowered,
And musical with birds and rills.
At times the soldier looked around,
Thinking he trod on pasture-ground,
Or clearing by the woodman made
Within a fresh, young land of shade :
No cottage-home met his regard,
Nor blackened stump, nor log-heap charred ;
There, never had the scythe been swung—
There, sharpened axe had never rung,
Sleek heifer lowed, or milk-maid sung !
A place of bloom and smiles it lay,
Nature's free gift to golden day.

XVII.

Facing the west each cohort wheeled
When near the borders of the pond,
While a dark wall of wood concealed
All objects that might lie beyond ;
Before them, in the sunshine's blaze,
Basked flaunting rows of glossy maize,
Bearing, upon their emerald spears,
A heavy load of infant ears ;
While podded bean, and melon vine,
Sated with draughts of dewy wine,
Clothed in gay garniture the mould ;
But wasting War turned not aside,
And through that rich plantation rolled

His stern and desolating tide—
Germs of abundance blotting out,
And blasting greenness in his route.

XVIII.

When a dark, hollow way was gained,
Bed of a stream for ages drained,
De Nonville, riding in the van,
Made momentary halt to scan,
On an elm-trunk, of bark bereft,
The pictured outlines of a man
Transfixed by dart, by hatchet cleft.
“Ho! Lamberville!” the Marquis cried,
Accosting an experienced guide—
“The meaning of this daub explain,
For new and fresh appears the stain!”

XIX.

“Yon sketch conveys monition stern
That blood will flow, and powder burn,
Unless our trumpets sound return ;—
Is warning to invader given,
That never will the native fierce
From his old hunting-ground be driven,
While arm can strike, and weapon pierce !
His tribe have laid a deadly snare,
And near us lie in bushy lair ;
The red confederates of France,

That lately hovered in advance,
Are gliding swiftly back, in fear,
To gain a cover in our rear :
My counsel, governor, would be
From thicket-edge to keep away,
And, westward, near the Genesee,
Our line of march at once to lay !”

XX.

“ The Senecas, by arts like these,
Blood in a Huron-heart may freeze ;
But warrior who has braved the fight
On fields where knight encountered knight,
Would ill his belt and spurs deserve,
One inch in his career to swerve,
Though every tree, in forest blind,
A savage hid its trunk behind.”

XXI.

The headmost of the line at last
Autaugua's narrow outlet passed ;
But while they forced, in disarray,
Through hazel underbrush their way,
From earth grim, crouching figures rose,
Like mountain-cats prepared to spring,
Counting the number of their foes,
With shafts notched lightly on the string ;
They cowered for one brief moment there,

But, ere the next flew swiftly by,
Rang out upon the throbbing air,
 Their wild and startling battle-cry :
Bard hath no power to picture well
The might of that demoniac yell ;
Back, back recoiled the valiant then,
And felt the frozen hand of fear
Knock at their hearts, as if a den,
By lions watched, lay yawning near !
Then whirling swiftly round and round,
 While a winged storm of arrows flew,
A pathway red the hatchet found,
 Barred morion and hanberk through.

XXII.

Distinguished by his snow-white crest,
De Nonville, calm and self-possess,
Gave, amid uproar wild and high,
Command with martial brevity :
His presence discipline restored,
He formed the broken ranks again—
Flashed, in the staggering van, his sword,
While reared his horse by missile gored,
And men at arms were round him slain.
“ Dismount, dismount, Le Troye ! and break
Their cover with my Rangers through ;
Let the long rifle music make,
In answer to this yelping crew ! ”

XXIII.

From his war-saddle to the ground,
Leaped the gray veteran with a bound,
While rattled sharply on his mail,
Rough, flinty arrow-heads like hail,
And forward, with elastic tread,
Promptly the charging party led.
Bold was the rush, and sternly met
By natives never daunted yet;
Loudly mad whoop and rifle-crack
By forest-arch were echoed back :
The ponderous war-club's weighty stroke,
Clubbed gun-stocks into pieces broke,
And, blunted in its swift career,
On breastplate rang the point of spear.
Frank, and the son of hunter-race,
Breast to breast, and face to face,
Grappled in desperate embrace ;
And fast the dinted forest-floor
Grew red and slippery with gore.

XXIV.

Awhile the Senecas maintained,
Combatting hand to hand, their ground ;
Then a reluctant flight they feigned
On a dim trail that southward wound.
Darting about, from tree to tree,

With panther-like agility,
Well-aimed discharges of their bows
Annoyed their hot pursuing foes,
Whose rapid volleys, in return,
Wounded alone the brush and fern.

XXV.

Soon did the scene of conflict change
From open-wood to deeper shade,
Where, piled up in confusion strange,
Lay mouldering elm and oak decayed ;
At once the hoary knight foresaw
That a dark plot had been designed,
By wily enemies, to draw
His corps into ambushment blind,
Where craft, not valor, would avail,
And fire-lock prove protection frail.
“ Halt ! my brave comrades, one and all ;
De Nonville’s bugles’ sound recall ! ”

Shouted the Baron out, in vain :
Like blood-hounds who had tasted gore,
And bayed upon the track for more,
His men dashed on amain.

XXVI.

Obstructions thickened in their way,
And momentarily the light of day,
As they advanced, grew less and less,

Within that hideous wilderness :
Their progress difficult and slow
Was often made by quagmire low,
That weight of frog could scarcely bear,
Dotted with grass-tufts, coarse and spare,
Unstirr'd by breeze, an awning spread,
Dismal and shaggy overhead,
That woven seemed in midnight's loom ;
But floundered, on the Rangers rash,
Vexed and bewildered, while the flash
Of ringing rifles lit the gloom.

XXVII.

Fruitless their toil !—unharm'd by lead,
Their taunting foes before them fled ;
And thrill of disappointment passed
Through many a rough and war-worn frame,
When gaunt, retiring forms at last,
Brown shadows closing round them fast,
Confused and indistinct became.
Tumultuous sounds of flight and chase
Ceased for a time in thicket wild,
As if the Spirit of the Place
Awed fiery Frank and forest-child.

XXVIII.

When paused his party, breath to take,
After long chase through brush and brake,

Fatigue and wounds the bitter fruit
Of mad, disorderly pursuit,
Le Troye another trial made
To lead them back to open glade,
And felt, in labyrinthine shade,
Like mariner, his compass lost,
On unknown sea befogged and tost,
Far from safe port and friendly shore,
While evil bark that lured him thither,
Gliding away he knew not whither,
Displayed black flag no more.

XXIX.

No well-worn wood-path was in sight
To guide his soldiery aright;
And sharply he rebuked his band
Who followed up a wily foe
In disregard of loud command
No farther in advance to go,
“As well might hunter try to bring
Falcon at bay upon the wing,
As Christian troops, in forest haunt,
Wage warfare with the savage gaunt!”
He muttered, looking round to find
Outlet from swamp obscure and blind.

XXX.

Caparisoned, from head to heel,
In corslet, greaves and cap of steel—
Encumbered by a gorgeous dress
That ill beseemed a wilderness,
Struggled the party to retrace
Their way from that benighted place

Chilled by the grove's eternal frown :
Their feet, encased in heavy boots,
Stumbled among ensnaring roots,

Or in the bog plunged down :
At random thus they fared, until
They reached a lazy, winding rill
Near its dull junction with a pool
Whose dark expanse lay hushed and cool,
When suddenly, with bended bows,
A cloud of savages arose,
Attacking them in rear and front,
Howling like wood-wolves when they hunt
Through wintry wastes, a grisly gang,
Bitten by hunger's pointed fang.

XXXI.

A hurtling stream of feathered darts
Riddled fair forms and gallant hearts ;
Well might the *boldest* feel dismay !
Swept were the leading files away

Like the round prairie's herbage dry
Before a flame when winds are high !
By menace and entreating word,
Above the roar of battle heard,
Rallied the knight his flying troops,
Broken in panic-stricken groups.
Though blanched his hair, from casque escaped,
And thinn'd by Time's unsparing shears,
His frame, for martial prowess shaped,
Retained the might of other years ;
His flashing eye and lifted arm,
In that dread crisis of alarm,
 A knightly scorn of fear revealed
Worthy of Bayard when he met,
By overwhelming odds beset,
 Death on his last red field.

xxxii.

He charged, to break the hostile ring
His serried ranks encompassing,
 Thrice, with a cheer, in vain ;
Five hundred bows the shaft propelled,
Five hundred throats the war-cry yelled,
And, one by one, the knight beheld
 His ill-starred Rangers slain.

XXXIII.

Warned by a runner of his band
That Yonnondio was at hand,
Speeding with Indian guides, to aid
His brethren trapped in ambuscade,
Old Can-ne-hoot, by loud halloo,
A knot of braves around him drew,
Resolved that tomahawk and knife
Should end at once the desperate strife ;
Prompt the dread movement to discern,
Exclaimed the Knight, in accent stern—
“ My lads, prepare their rush to meet,
And, mark ye, there is no retreat !
Throw not an ounce of lead away—
God and St. Dennis be our stay ! ”

XXXIV.

There was a momentary hush ;
Then, giving cry like unleashed hounds,
Dashed forward, with impetuous rush,
Wild warriors clearing brake and bush,

In quick, elastic bounds :

Guns, levelled with destructive aim,
Poured forth a crimson sheet of flame,
Ringing, in one explosion loud,
The knell of many a warrior proud ;
But staunch survivors faltered not,

While round them hissed the raking shot,
Old Can-ne-hoot, their forest-king,
Through sulphurous vapor following.

XXXV.

As avalanche, from mountain-head
Descending with resistless force,
Upwrenches from primeval bed
Huge blocks of granite in its course;
As freshet, swollen in its flow
By heavy rain, dissolving snow,
Against a bridge of massive arch,
Too frail for its restrainless march,
Dashing in thunder and in spray,
Timber and buttress tears away,
Thus back that Indian onslaught bore
Crushed phalanx that could form no more.
Followed a diabolic yell
When foeman, brained by hatchet, fell;
Though the poor, mangled wretch yet breathed,
Dark fingers, in his hair enwreathed,
Secured, by aid of teeth and knife,
Grim, reddened trophies of the strife.

XXXVI.

A gallant remnant of the Franks,
Though shattered and o'erthrown their ranks,
Fought, fearfully outnumbered, on,

And buffet dealt with arms of brawn
Encircled by a howling crew ;
His armor hacked, with blood-drops wet,
A leader's voice and presence yet
Cheered that devoted few.

Enraged to see his boldest braves
Recoil like spent and broken waves
Encountered by an iron strand,
Old Can-ne-hoot, his scalp-lock white
Dancing in air, upon the knight
Rushed, tomahawk in hand.

XXXVII.

Though partly parried was the blow,
Its force unhelmed his stalwart foe,
Whose eye flashed lightning, while his blade
Wounded with every pass it made.
Equal in years—in height the same,
Both known by martial deed to fame,
Fought, with youth's ardor uncontroll'd,
Stroke answering stroke—those warriors old.
Unblenching, though in copious tide
Oozed the dark gore from gashes wide,
The Sachem, naked to the waist,
His mail-sheathed adversary faced.

XXXVIII.

His glance more deadly and malign
Grew while he felt his strength decline—
More proud a spirit in which burned
Impulse that fear and mercy spurned ;
Regardless of unequal fight,

His long leg-knife he drew,
When the sharp weapon of the knight
Descending, clove the handle light

Of his war-axe in two.

Not fleeter pouncing eagle flies
To rob the fish-hawk of his prize ;
Shark, scenting a repast of blood,
Not swifter hurries through the flood,
Than, dodging death-blow, by the wrist
Seized he his dread antagonist,

Whose left arm free, a pistol press'd
Against the maddened Indian's breast:

A bright flash heralded the ball—

One moment stood, erect and tall,

Old Can-ne-hoot—the next, he fell,

His frowning brow still terrible ;

Low was a mighty Sachem brought—

His last fight had a brave man fought !

XXXIX.

Have ye not seen, on Western plain,
When leader, shagg'd and old, is slain,

With angry roaring on their foes,
Gallop a herd of buffaloes;
Huge forms in front, unstaïd by fear,
Pushed onward by the frantic rear;
Their eyes, while horns tossed high in air,
Glowing like coals through matted hair?
Impelled by wrath more frightful far,
Waking the wildest howl of war—
To higher pitch of frenzy fired,
When, grasping knife, their Chief expired,
Avenging sons of forest brown,
To earth, in one dread rush, bore down
Their foemen few and tired.

XL.

De Nonville, from a fearful doom,
Too late arrived his van to save;
Strewed was a place of blood and gloom
With shattered gun and tarnished plume,
Cleft helm and broken glaive.

The natives raised retreat-halloo!
When, sounding charge, his bugle blew,
Just finished their employment dread
Of scalping the disfigured dead.
Ah! well might that revolting scene
Give paleness to his troubled mien!
Where were his gallant rifle-corps
Who mustered, full of life, at morn?

High would their pulses beat no more
When banner waved and blade was drawn !
All—all had died save leader gray,
A pinioned captive borne away,
Reserved for torture at the stake
By tribesmen, filled with rage and grief,
That glad the wandering ghost would make
Of Can ne-hoot, their fallen Chief.

XLI.

Galled by the sting of wounded pride—
By dark disaster mortified,
The baffled Marquis offered gold
For Iroquois scalps in vain ;
Cowed were his allies to behold,
Their couch the swamp's defiling mould,
Hacked forms of Frenchmen slain :—
Boughs bending o'er them, sad of hue,
As if old elms around that grew
Dropped down a melancholy pall,
And mourned, *though mute*, their timeless fall.

END OF CANTO SIXTH.

EL YONNONDIO.

CANTO SEVENTH.

THE REVELATION.

They bound him to the fatal stake, and high
Destruction's fagots round the warrior piled :
There was unwonted moisture in his eye,

For prayed he, in that moment, for his child ;
A torch was thrown, by hand with blood defiled,
On the dark death-pyre :—whence, oh whence the
shriek

That, rising shrill above the tumult wild,
Tinged with a wanner shade the victim's cheek,
While parted his blanched lips in vain essay to speak !

I.

Retreating from the fatal spot
Where Valor died but yielded not,
Thickly the Senecas o'erspread,

With hiding brush and leaves, their dead :—
For sorrowing would warrior go,
Dishonored by the knife of foe,
To lands the setting sun below.
When reached the river's willowed side
Pirogues they launched upon the tide,
And, landing on the western shore,
A moment looked the landscape o'er.
The matted forest-depths were mute ;
Heard was no larum on the gale,
Announcing Frank in close pursuit,
Or hated Huron on the trail.
Checked by the Romans of the West,
Invader paused, with drooping crest,
To scoop for brethren where they fell
In earth a rude receptacle :
Knowing that scream of carrion-bird
Another day would there be heard,
While snarling monster of the wold
Snuffed tainted air, and pawed the mould.

II.

Thou phantom, Military Fame !
How long will Genius laud thy name,
And curtain features from the sight
More foul than those Khorassen's seer
Hid behind veil of silver bright,
Tempting his victim to draw near !

How long will thy misleading lamp,
Through regions wrapped in smoke and fire,
To slaughter's cavern, red and damp,
Guide beardless boy and gray-haired sire?
Up, fearless battlers for the right,
And flood old groaning earth with light!
Bid nations ponder well and pause
When blade corrupt ambition draws—
Oh! teach the world that conquest wears
A darker brand than felon bears;
Prolific fount, from earliest time,
Of murder, orphanage and crime!

III.

Obtained, at last, returning band
A view of fortress, rudely plann'd,
Fenced by huge palisadoes round,
And wanting bastion, trench and mound.
Its anxious inmates, wild of face,
Rushed in a body from the place,
While rose, from forest edge, a cry,
Now plaintive, low—now shrill and high—
Each repetition of the call
Announcing an invader's fall.
News thus, to children of the shade,
By marked, expressive sound conveyed,
Telling of victory achieved,
All, with a frantic joy, received;

And hurried on to meet, the while,
Plumed martial forms in Indian file,
Advancing :—slow and dignified
Their march across the clearing wide.

IV.

Red pole in front a savage bore,
On which hung scalps begrimmed with gore;
Behind him came the captive knight,
Wounded, and stripped of armor bright—
His figure of heroic mould
Fixing regard of young and old,
Who augured, from his dauntless air,
That torture he would bravely bear,
And, as beseemed a warrior, die
Giving no groan of agony.

V.

Changed was wild ecstasy to grief,
When, looking vainly for their chief,
Ran glances of the troubled throng,
From man to man, the line along.
A melancholy wail and low
Told of a leader's overthrow ;
To hollow dirge notes for the dead
The long procession timed its tread,
For lord had Can-ne-wa-gus lost,
And mourning tribe, from child to seer,

Deemed triumph bought at fearful cost
Marred by the fall of *one* so dear.

VI.

Passed was the middle hour of day,
Down poured the sun a milder ray,
When elders of the tribe convened,
To fix the doom of captive brave,
Beneath old oaks whose umbrage screened
Partly from sight the council grave.
From long-stemmed pipes rose fragrant fumes,
And curled around their eagle plumes ;
Awhile impressive silence reigned,
And sitting posture each maintained.
Men of inferior renown
Formed outer ring of faces brown,
And near, life giving to the scene,
Dark beldame of malignant mien,
And stripling, armed with tiny bow,
On noiseless feet moved to and fro,
A better view of Frank to gain
Who mighty Can-ne-hoot had slain.

VII.

At length a man of many snows,
A forest patriarch, arose ;
Bright medal on his bosom shone,
And richly broidered was his zone ;

Closely he drew his robe of skin
Around a shrunken frame and thin,
Then thus harangued his brethren sage
In the cracked, trembling tones of age.
“Heirs of a country, green and wide,
O’erran and conquered by your sires,
In vain hath Yonnondio tried
To quench, in war’s ensanguined tide,
One of the Five Great Fires !
Its smoke-clouds rising, thick and high,
Have filled with tears his blinded eye ;
Its angry blaze his hand hath burned—
The hatchets of my tribe are red—
But home the chief hath not returned
Who Yonnondio’s fury spurned,
And forth the brave to battle led.”

VIII.

“At morn, upon the dew-webbed glade,
His moccason no impress made ;
Swifter than eagles were his feet—
Who could in craft with him compete ?
His voice was deeper in its tone
Than trumpet by the storm-king blown,
And his dread arm no second blow
In battle gave opposing foe.
By lightning of the Pale-Face slain,
Alone let not the Mighty stray,

Across a wide and dreary plain,
Toward the Green Isles of endless day.
I hear his whisper on the gale—
He calls upon yon captive pale
The briars from his path to clear :
Men of Ge-nun-de-wah, awake !
And high, around the blackened stake,
The funeral-pile uprear !”

IX.

To interjections of assent
Gave his dark auditory vent
While the time-honored prophet spoke ;
And when, with flashing eye, they heard
Die on the breeze his closing word,

The ring its order broke :
A tribe's united lips poured out
One frightful and revengeful shout—
Hags laughed, and clapped their skinny hands
Till rattled loud their bracelet-bands ;
In side-long dance like demons yelled,
Startling and mystic orgies held,
And sentenced prisoner abused,
To every term of insult used.

X.

They told him that his nation base
Were whiter far of heart than face—

That petticoat, not warrior's crest
And costume, would beseem him best,
And squaw, that gave him birth, did style
The mother of a coward vile.
Mid taunting screams of fierce delight,
Tribesmen for cruelty renowned,
And decked with spoils of recent fight,
To painted post the Christian knight
With toughened ligature then bound.
Tormentors drew his foot upon
The fatal bear-skin moccason;
And flaming torch placed o'er his head,
An emblem sure of fiery doom,
On his white hair a radiance shed,
And lit the wild-wood's leafy gloom.

XI.

No vain appeal for life he made—
From arm of flesh hoped not for aid;
A glance, that seemed to say '*adieu!*'
On sublunary things he threw,
And strove, with mind composed, to meet
A fate with agony replete.
He longed, in that dark trial-hour,
On Blanche, his erring child, to gaze
Erewhile his fondly cherished flower,
And light of his declining days;
He yearned upon her head to pour

A father's benison once more,
And hear his name pronounced in tone,
Gentle and low—*her mother's own*.

XII.

Pine splinters, resinous and dry,
Light brush, and sere leaves of the wild,
A death-pyre forming loose and high,
Round the brave veteran were piled,
And redly shone a crackling brand,
To light it, in the Prophet's hand ;
But, ere the smoking fuel blazed,
Heard was the marked, peculiar cry
By Indian warrior ever raised
When camp-ground of his nation nigh.
Arrested by that signal loud
Was torture's work ;—and on the crowd
A momentary silence fell ;—
Then rose a shrill, responsive yell
As all imperfectly descried,
Through net-work of the leaves, at last,
De Grai and his recovered bride,
Young Wun-nut-hay, the greenwood's pride,
And cinctured forms, with faces dyed
In battle-paint, approaching fast.

XIII.

The motley multitude beheld
Another spectacle disclosed,
When towering oaks, all gray with eld,
Their trunks no longer interposed.
Four Senecas on hurdle bore
A pale-browed warrior wounded sore ;
Though moss the wattled osiers lined
On which his helpless limbs reclined,
And moved, without rude jar, along,
His bearers, firm of tread and strong,
To stifle broken moan of pain
He tasked his ebbing strength in vain :
And though a day in flowery June
Not long had passed its fervid noon,
Shook the poor wretch, as if with cold,
And hollow cheek and glassy eye
Impressively beholder told
That his last hour was speeding by.

XIV.

Air rang with shouts when nearer drew,
In ordered line, the comers new ;
And when low boughs concealed no more
Bound victim by his funeral-pyre,
There came a sudden paleness o'er
The cheek of Blanche—and her old sire

Glared wildly on encircling foes,
Like one just woke from horrid dream,
And, clear above the din, arose
His frantic daughter's frightful scream.

XV.

"Give way, incarnate fiends, give way!"
Shouted impetuous De Grai—
Wrath glittered in his proud dark eye,
His unsheathed dagger flashed on high,
And parted while he dashed along,
As keel divides rough waves, the throng.
On burning brand he fearless trode,
Through kindling fagots opened road,
And, though black clouds of heated smoke
Their blinding folds around him twined,
He cut, with quick, indignant stroke,
Bands that the fainting knight confined.

XVI.

"Ho! Senecas!—and will ye see,
Unmoved, the foe yon captive free?
Down with the white intruder, down!
And scalp hack piece-meal from his crown!"
Aroused by taunt of wrinkled seer,
And grasping bow, war-axe and spear,
At once fierce forms begirt De Grai,
Bearing from stake Le Troye away;

As booming waters of the deep
Round some lone sea-rock darkly sweep
When evil powers the storm unchain,
And skill of mariner is vain.
Already leaving bloody trace,
Long, whistling shaft had grazed his face,
And flying hatchet from his head,
A glossy lock of brown had shred,
When cleared On-yit-ha, with a bound,
The living wall that hemmed him round,
And made, attention to command,
A haughty toss of lifted hand ;
Then to full height his form updrew,
And thus rebuked the savage crew.

XVII.

“Rash, shameless men ! would ye o’erthrow
Laws honored by the great of yore ?
Drop tomahawk, unstring the bow,
And to its sheath the knife restore !
My brother, whom ye fain would slay,
Though wearing still the pallid shade
By fathers caught from ocean’s spray,
Is clansman by adoption made.
Long in our vale he hath encamped ;
My totem on his breast is stamped,
And Can-ne-hoot on him conferred
A name that rings like battle-word !”

Allusion to their fallen chief,
From dusky throng called groan of grief,
And wond'ring orator inquired
Why thus they mourned ?—then mischief fired
The wily Prophet's serpent eye,
And moved his lips in prompt reply.

XVIII.

“ His face great Ou-we-nee-you veils
Behind a black and lowering cloud ;
For Can-ne-hoot a nation wails—
The monarch-pine in dust is bowed :
Protecting roof his branches cast,
Above our heads, when roared the blast ;
Through rolling years his aged form
Defied red bolt of growling storm ;
Mad whirlwinds wrestled with his trunk,
And from the dread encounter shrunk ;
But never more to glad our eyes,
Above the forest-tops, will rise
His brow, undimmed by winter's blight,
His crown rejoicing in the light.”

XIX.

“ Why tell On-yit-ha of the fame
That lustre gives paternal name ?
No eulogist red warrior needs
From Erie to the Salt Lake known—

The tale of whose heroic deeds
Swift courier-winds abroad have blown.
In battle with yon pale-face fell
The ruler that we loved so well :
He slumbers with his broken bow,
Rude covering of leaves below,
Pierced by the lightning of the foe.

XX.

“ By young and old he was revered,
Proud far-off tribes his anger feared ;
Death in a hundred wars he faced,
His lodge a thousand trophies graced.
On the green prairies of the west,
And where, through wilderness remote,
Missouri rolls with turbid breast,
Pawnee and Omahaw he smote.
At their own hearths his arrow shot
The Chictaghic and Wyandot :—
He woke, on banks of southern stream,
Catawba from his midnight dream,
And victor paced the lonely shore
On which, in foam dissolving, breaks
Forever, with a solemn roar,
The dark blue SIRE of mighty Lakes.”

XXI.

Emotion of revenge and grief
A passing moment shook the chief,
And covered with a cloud his face,
Then gave to nobler feelings place.
“ The task is difficult, old SEER,
 Deep groans of anguish to repress
While rings announcement in mine ear
 That I am fatherless—
That he, the mighty one, is slain,
On whom the Five Great Tribes in vain,
When boughs, wrenched off by whirlwinds, fall
From tree of peace, henceforth will call.
The proudest seat, at council fire,
Is vacant made by death of sire ;
And loud will be the voice of wail
For Eagle of this river-vale
In the bright fulness of renown,
And fighting for our homes, struck down :
But in our sorrow feel we not
That *his* must be a happy lot ;
For spirits of the just and brave
Pass, when the war of life is done,
To a green land, that knows no grave,
Outspread below the setting sun.”

XXII.

“ In fair encounter with his foe,
Eye meeting eye, and foot to foot,
Yon wounded chief, with locks of snow,
Shot down the mighty Can-ne-hoot ;
And, like proud ancestors of old,
Heroes in reverence I hold
Regardless of their race and name :—
Enough that they are heirs of fame
Who scorn dishonorable deed,
And born their fellow-men to lead !
Yon Pale-Face, who my father slew,
Hath proved himself a warrior true ;
And time the law hath hallowed made
That gives red native of the shade,
When death hath sadly thinn'd the band,
A right war-captive to demand,
Be his complexion pale or red,
To fill void places of the dead !”

XXIII.

“ Though colored by the foam-flecked wave,
Od-deen-yo is my brother brave ;
Regard from Can-ne-hoot he won
Who called him his adopted son ;
Proud eagle feathers form his crest,
And gleams the turtle on his breast,

Tokens by which our laws alone
The grade of chieftainship make known.
Therefore to him the right belongs
To free yon captive from his thongs,
And wash the death-paint from his cheek—
Ye, who that right dare question, speak!"!

XXIV.

On-yit-ha's tone was stern and high—
He paused in vain to hear reply ;
By vengeful thought no longer fired,
The dark encircling throng retired ;
Vanished all outward sign of strife,
Replaced in leathern sheath was knife ;
Aside the knotty war-club flung,
Keen hatchet lowered, and bow unstrung.

XXV.

Meanwhile, by friendly arm upborne,
His vesture blackened, scorched and torn,
From swoon the rescued Baron woke ;
A moment on De Grai he gazed,
Repulsively his arm then raised,
And fiercely thus outbroke.
"Hence ! fell betrayer of my child,
Oh, once the pure and undefiled !
Hence ! rather than owe life to thee,
Thou monster of iniquity

In fair exterior disguised!
Tortures more dreadful I would bear
Than fiend, in region of despair,
For Wo hath yet devised :
And added, while he back recoiled
As if his person had been soiled
By some contagious thing and foul—
“ On thee may black misfortune scowl!
A father’s curse be on thy head
To blast”—ere further word he said,
Smote on his ear a piteous cry,
Rustled the leaf-clad thicket nigh,
And wildly toward the stern old man,
With outstretched arms, a lady ran,
And, falling at his feet, thus sued
In penitential attitude.

XXVI.

“ Father ! thine erring Blanche forgive,
Oh, breathe the word that bids her live !
Her heart, wild home of sin and fear,
Would break thy malison to hear :
From thee she hath been absent long,
And thou hast suffered grievous wrong;
Ill was repaid thy watchful love ;—
Forgetful of a God above,
She left thee, lured by lover’s call,
Gray haired, and lonely in thy hall :

That God hath visited with pain
Her throbbing pulse, and fevered brain ;
A babe from her embraces torn,
Whose lonely grave, in woods unshorn,
Is black with shade both night and morn.
How changed the face, to thee upcast,
Since looked on by a father last !
The rose that gave it bloom hath fled,
The joy that made it bright is dead."

XXVII.

Awhile, in breast of haughty sire,
Love waged tumultuous war with ire :
The former triumphed—and he raised
From earth the suppliant, and gazed
Intently on her bloodless face ;
Then while the tears fell fast and warm,
Strained to his heart her drooping form
In passionate embrace.
Though dawned and fled had many a day,
And thinner grown his locks of gray,
Since Blanche his castle-hold forsook
Without one parting word or look,
By him forgotten in that hour
Was her neglected lute and bower,
Filial ingratitude the chief
Ingredient in his cup of grief ;

His lonely home, unlighted hearth,
And hopes, frail blossoms, crushed to earth.

XXVIII.

The being circled by his arms,
Though dimmed by agony were charms
Once lauded by the courtly throng—
Which bard had made his theme of song,
Was lovely still :—and one recalled
By frozen bonds of death enthralled ;
For in the blue of her soft eye
Gleamed the rich light of days gone by,
And seemed her glossy, chestnut hair,
The *same* her mother used to wear
When the proud nobles of the land
Were rival-suitors for her hand.

XXIX.

“Cling closely to this bosom old,
Fair image of the lost and dear !
I cannot deem thy mother cold,
And in her shroud, while thou art near.
My prayer the *Holy One* hath heard,
And hither hath the wanderer sped
As speedeth to her nest the bird
When day-light leaves the mountain-head.
Although a blighted name is thine,
And stained the honor of my line,

By day and night, on land and sea,
My dreams and thoughts have been of thee."

XXX.

"Oh! I have borne what few can bear,
And in my heart the bitter springs
Of grief been opened, while despair
Swept with rude hand the quivering strings;
But on my wretchedness a ray
Of comfort hath been shed to day,
For I have looked upon my child,
Poor, houseless wanderer of the wild,
And heard her thrilling voice outpour
Its clear, melodious tone once more!
And can it be that flower so fair
Hath breathed contaminated air—
That worms within its heart lie coiled,
And every fragrant leaf unsoiled?
That never will the minstrel-strain,
Cheer my ancestral home again—
That soon its hospitable hearth
Will colder be than burial earth,
While creatures haunt the ruin gray
Fostered by silence and decay?
The Demon lies, my daughter dear!
Who whispers ever in mine ear
That paramour of wretch thou art
All red of hand and black of heart!

The treach'rous murderer who gave
To MORDAUNT an untimely grave !”

XXXI.

“ By whom”—a feeble voice exclaimed—
“ Am I, poor dying sinner, named ?”
The Baron turned abruptly round,
His eye directed by the sound,
And underneath an aged tree,
While summer-winds shook fitfully
The leaves upon its hoary bough,
De Lisle, the Jesuit, descried
Through grim disguise of paint that dyed
Contorted face, and troubled brow.

XXXII.

On bed of shaggy fells he lay,
And, bending o'er him, Wun-nut-hay
A gourd-shell to his lips applied,
Filled from the streamlet's lapsing tide.
In haste a deep, reviving draught,
To cool his burning thirst, he quaffed ;
Then, while his glance new lustre caught,
Impatiently Le Troye besought
By word and gesture to draw near ;
As if the wretch, ere tongue grew cold,
At length dark secret would unfold
Cherished for many a year.

XXXIII.

Approaching, as the priest desired,
The Baron of his state inquired ;
Gazed, with commiserating glance,
Upon his changing countenance,
While, wet by drops from wound undressed,
Red grew the robe that wrapped his breast.
“ A few more pangs will rend this form,
And closed will be a day of storm—
A few more groans these lips forsake,
And life's frail, golden chalice break.”

XXXIV.

“ When torn by lead, or biting steel,
The lacerated flesh may heal ;
But drug and rare balsamic weed
Were never known to work a cure
In bosoms guilty and impure,
With ulcers filled that inly bleed ;
The fatal bullet of De Grai,
Lodged in my trunk, gives little pain
Compared with fires that night and day
Feed slowly on my shattered brain.
If I could weep repentant tears,
Methinks my pulse would calmer grow,
And taunting demon, in mine ears,
Would cease the trump of doom to blow :

But sooner would joy's roseate hue
Flush the cold features of a corse,
Than one reviving drop bedew
These withered cheeks—and, aye, remorse
Wakes memory of evil deeds,
Waving the black flag of despair,
And, kissing cross and counting beads,
I murmur forth *unanswered* prayer.

xxxv.

Accusing conscience in my heart
Plunged deeply an envenomed dart,
When, breathing wo in every word,
Thy voice, addressing Blanche, I heard :
And, while around me dimly thronged
The phantoms of the buried past,
I prayed that those whom I had wronged
Forgiving glance on me would cast
Before my tortured soul took flight;
And listen, while the *word* was spoken,
Fraught with a power to reunite
The ties of love by slander broken."

xxxvi.

"No brother of the craft am I,
Who shrive the guilty ere they die :
In penance-cell I never stood,
And warrior's helm, not monkish hood,

Comports with my profession best.
But why disquieted in mind ?
A holy man should be resigned
When passing to the Land of Rest :
Where the tree falleth, let it lie !
Nor doth it matter, when we die,
What hands the turf above us heap ;
And, Priest ! as calm will be thy sleep
Beneath the sunless forest mould,
As in dark crypt of convent old."

XXXVII.

" Why should remembrance overpower
Thy spirit in its parting hour ?
What secret dread can breast of thine
Within its hidden depths enshrine ?
Thy name, De Lisle, both far and near,
Is to thy wandering Order dear ;
For banner of the Cross by thee
Displayed hath been on land and sea,
And rugged ways thy feet have trod,
Ambassador to man from God."

XXXVIII.

The dying Jesuit replied
In accent unto scorn allied ;
" Beneath a friar's dusky stole
May lurk a stern, revengeful soul ;

And any hypocrite may make
Prayers, long and loud, at holy shrine,
Or, with meek, solemn look, partake
Of consecrated bread and wine.
Although my garb is coarse and plain,
And faded by the wind and rain,
A gallant livery I wore
When, inmate of thy castle hall,
I gaily paced its marble floor,
And gazed upon its pictured wall."

xxxix.

"Start not!—I am no phantom dread,
Though long have I been mourned as dead!
Not know me, Baron?—who from dust
The banner of thy fathers raised,
Reckless of pike and sabre-thrust,
And battle-fires that round him blazed?"

"If told, De Lisle, by thee aright,

That gallant boy, so wise and brave
Beyond his years,"—rejoined the Knight—

"Is lying in a bloody grave:

When Blanche with her betrayer fled,

A swift, pursuing band he led,

But came not back:—"

"Foul lie," exclaimed
The dying Jesuit—"I framed."
Mordaunt yet lives, but feebly thrill

His pulses that will soon be still,
And mist will cloud his eye ere day
Dies in the arms of evening gray."

XL.

"The *peasant* who, in thickest fight,
Snatched from the dust thy banner bright,
And, dashing blood-drops from his face,
Shouted the war-cry of thy race—
The *wretch*, from straw-thatched hovel raised
To place in dome where grandeur blazed,
Who dared to sue, in height of pride,
A high-born maid to be his bride ;
And, *crossed in love*, who darkly coined
A tale that three fond hearts disjoined,
And drove from France, far, far away,
Thy slandered daughter and De Grai,
Before thee lies !"—The Baron took
A backward step, with startled look,
As if he deemed, all pale and gaunt,
The grave had yielded up Mordaunt !

XLI.

Resumed the dying man :—" Behold
This fine-wrought chain of yellow gold !—
The glittering thing thy daughter gave,
As guerdon meet to deck the brave,
When rode she forth, on palfrey fleet,

A weary, war-worn sire to greet,
Returning from that field where brand
Flashed for the first time in my hand.
Oh, fatal gift to me it proved !—
The *donor* from that hour was loved
'Till came the well remembered morn
When hope was crushed by cruel scorn,
And, blasted by her look of pride,
Within me better feelings died."

XLII.

" My soul the lair of hate became,
And when De Grai thy daughter won,
I breathed detraction on his name,
And the black web of falsehood spun.
Old man!—with *him* be reconciled—
Chaste was his passion for thy child !"

XLIII.

Gloom, on the visage of Le Troye,
Was lighted up with sudden joy
To hear, from guilt's half-palsied tongue,
Truths, by remorse the prompter wrung,
That chased, from fame of young De Grai,
Clouds of imputed crime away,
And made his heart with rapture thrill
To know that Blanche was stainless still.
Awhile, fixed posture he maintained,

And deep emotion speech restrained ;
Then called he, with impassioned air,
Upon the fond and faithful pair.
As happy father hails a son
Returning from a distant land,
And breathes a hurried benison,
While hand is interlocked in hand,
So greeting the young Chevalier,
Whose arm upheld his daughter dear,
Bright drops the gray-haired warrior shed,
That had in bliss their fountain-head.

XLIV.

“ Heir of that gallant friend”—he cried—
“ Who, shielding me in battle, died !
Pure in my sight again thou art,
And doubly precious to a heart
Too long by tales estranged from thee
That linked thy name with infamy.
While quaffing death’s embittered cup,
Yon penitent his crime confessed,
And, with a groan, surrendered up
Long cherished secrets of his breast :
The cord that knit our soul in twain,
Was riven by his plotting brain,
And charges by dark hint conveyed,
Between us wide disruption made ;
But sorrow’s beating storm is o’er—

Affection's band will break no more.
Though he this grievous wrong hath done,
Oh, be not wroth with him, my son!
A pardoned foeman let him die,
For gleams contrition in his eye;
And, withered and untimely old,
The lost Mordaunt in him behold.

XLV.

All turned their gaze upon the Priest—
His pulse to throb that instant ceased;
No groan, appalling to the ear,
Betokened that he died in fear;
Or struggle, terrible to sight,
Marked the mysterious spirit's flight;
But faintly trembled, with a chill,
His wasted form—then all was still.
Gone from his cheek was fever's glow,
And crucifix his right hand pressed
To lips through which, in languid flow,
Oozed blood bedabbling chin and breast:
That dull gray shade his face o'erspread
Which dims the features of the dead—
Imparting to the stony mien
Look that is *ne'er forgot*, once seen.
His hair was touched with winter's rime,
Sad work of passion wild, not time;
And thought, anticipating age,

Though brief his mortal pilgrimage,
His brow had furrowed o'er, and drawn
Deep lines upon his visage wan.

XLVI.

Thus, from its tenement of clay,
Passed soul of God-like gifts away,
Whose ill-directed aim and powers
Robbed life of sunshine, calm and flowers :
Thus, ere the noon of manhood, died,
Blind slave of impulse, scorn and pride !
A being of no common mould ;
He wandered from the way of right,
And sought polluted fires to light
Torch of ambition uncontroll'd.

XLVII.

He might have gained the lore of sage—
Lived a proud land-mark of his age,
And name, on glory's record high,
Transmitted to posterity ;
But the dread Tempter he obeyed,
And shipwreck of his honor made.
Peace to his ashes !—long ago
His corse was laid the sod below,
And forms an undistinguished part
Of cold earth now his fiery heart.
Wild red men trenched for him a grave

Kissed by the Genesee's dark wave ;
But misty centuries have fled
Since hollowed was that narrow bed,
And hidden is the spot forever
By shifting channel of the river.

XLVIII.

L' ENVOY TO THE READER.

Young leaves the brow of summer crowned
When sire unsullied daughter found,
And blessing on De Grai, restored
To place in his regard, outpoured :
But faded drapery from the trees
Was shaken down by autumn-breeze,
When peal of bell and minstrel-strain,
And banner waving from the wall,
Told that the Baron trod again
The floor of his ancestral hall.

XLIX.

Through chambers, damp and long unused,
Bright fires once more a warmth diffused ;
The butler broached, with merry jest,
Old cask that held the *cellar's best*,
And vanished, from the banquet-room,
Spirits of loneliness and gloom.
From kennel darting with a bound,

A welcome whined the aged hound ;
And tenants of the broad estate
Thronged gaily to the castle-gate,
And waved with shout their hats on high,
Greeting their lord right heartily !
With cries of joy, domestics old
Flocked their young mistress to behold ;
Her sorrows fled,—her wanderings o'er,—
Beneath the roof of home once more,
While towered a form of manly pride,
Her faithful lover, by her side.

L.

Though blest the happy pair with all
That rank and riches could bestow,
In converse used they to recall
Long hours of exile and of wo :
And both in thought did often stray
Over the blue dividing main,
And tread, with fawn-eyed Wun-nut-hay,
The Genesee's green shore again ;
Or wigwam, in his valley bright,
Depicture to the mental sight
Where dwelt, their hearts with joy elate,
On-yit-ha and his dusky mate ;
The former proud of bright fusee,
Gift of Od-deen-yo o'er the sea,
With stock whereon, in bold relief,

Carved was the totem of the chief:
The latter decked with jewels rare,
Prized parting gifts of sister fair,
And chain, that once the Jesuit wore,
Wrought from the purest golden ore.

END OF CANTO SEVENTH.

NOTES.

PROEM.

Their rivers run with narrowed bounds.

"That trees are great promoters of lakes and rivers, appears from a well known fact in North America; for, since the woods and forests have been grubbed and cleared, all bodies of water that were considerable a century ago, will not now drive a common mill." Natural History of Selborne—Kalm's Travels in North America.

CANTO I.

Tyrondequait was darkly lying.—STANZA I.

By some writers the word was written Tyrondequait, by others Irondequat. Smith in his history of New-York, alludes to a public trading house "at Irondequat in the Senecas' land." The name given on modern maps, to this romantic bay, is 'Irondequoit.'

With arching neck and air of pride

The white swan floated on the tide.—STANZA II.

The author's father, a pioneer of Western New-York, informed him, that in the first settlement of the country he saw a flock of twenty swans "spreading their snowy sails" in the Bay of Tyrondequait. Two or three summers since, a brother of the author shot a swan, of large dimensions, while flying over a Pond in the vicinity of Avon; and more recently, one was killed in Tyrondequait Bay, by a gentleman of Rochester.

Gaunt wolf-dogs panted with the heat.—STANZA IV.

The Indians rear a breed of dogs crossed with the wolf and fox—remarkable for their speed, sharp noses, and pointed, upright ears.

On Cadaracqui's calm expanse.—STANZA VII.

Cadaracqui is the aboriginal name of Ontario. "The Senecas (whom the French call *Sonontouons*) are situated between Lake Erie and Cadaracqui Lake, near the great fall of Iagara (sometimes called Oniagira, Ochniagara,) by which all the Indians that live round Lake Erie, round the Lake of the Hurons, round the Lake of the Illinois, or Michigan, and round the great

Upper Lake, generally pass in their way to Canada." Smith's History of New-York.

*While hither, on the swelling waves,
Float Yonnondio's hostile braves.*—STANZA VIII.

Yonnondio was a title originally given by the Five Nations to M. de Montmagny, but became a style of address in their treaties, by which succeeding Governor Generals of New France were designated.

*The coward Hurons guide them here,
And fondly hope, in lucky hour,
To crush the Aganuschion power.*

"The Five Nations were the Mohawks, the Oneidas, the Cayugas, the Onondagas and the Senecas. The Virginian Indians gave them the name of Massawomekes; the Dutch called them Maquas, or Makakuase; and the French, Iroquois. Their appellation at home was the Mingoos, and sometimes the Aganuschion, or United People." THATCHER.

"When the Dutch began the settlement of this country, all the Indians on Long Island and the northern shore of the sound, on the banks of the Connecticut, Hudson, Delaware and Susquehanna rivers, were in subjection to the Five Nations, and acknowledge it by the payment of tribute. The French historians of Canada, both ancient and modern, agree that the more northern Indians were driven before the superior martial prowess of the confederates. The author of the book entitled, "*Relation de ce qui s'ert passe de plus remarquable aux mission de peres, de la campagne de Jesus en la nouvelle France*," published with the privilege of the French King, at Paris, in 1661, informs us that all the Northern Indians were harassed by the Five Nations. "Partout, (says he, speaking in the name of the missionaries,) nous trouvons Iroquois, qui comme nu phantome importun, nous obsede en tous lieux." Smith's History of New-York.

*De Nonville, with an eye of skill,
Took measurement of slope and hill.*—STANZA XII.

De la Barre was succeeded by the Marquis De Nonville, Colonel of the dragoons, who arrived with a reinforcement in 1685. In the preceding year the French availed themselves of a peace with the Five Nations, to build fortifications on the northern waters, and extending their fur trade among the northern and western Indians. They were opposed by the Iroquois. The Senecas, who were the most numerous of the allied tribes, and nearest the theatre of action, annoyed the French, by cutting off trading parties laden with ammunition and arms for the tribes who hunted for them.

De la Barre collected at Cadaracqui Fort (now Kingston,) the forces of Canada, but sickness in his camp compelled him to abandon his military operations against the Five Nations, and resort to negotiation. A treaty was held at Kaihohage, between Indian deputies, with Garangula at their head, and Canadian Governor. It was on this occasion that the Onondaga chief in a harangue that has been pronounced by the lamented Clinton equal in oratorical merit to Logan's famous speech, exclaimed—"Yonnon-djo!—you must have believed when you left Quebec, that the sun had burnt

up all the forests which render our country inaccessible to the French, or that the lakes had so far overflown the banks, that they had surrounded our castles, and that it was impossible for us to get out of them. Yes, surely you must have dreamed so, and the curiosity of seeing so great a wonder, has brought you so far. *Now* you are undeceived. I and the warriors here present, are come to assure you, that the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas and Mohawks are yet alive. I thank you in their name, for bringing back into their country the calumet, which your predecessor received from their hands. It was happy for you, that you left underground that murdering hatchet so often dyed in the blood of the French.

"Hear, Yonnondio! I do not sleep. I have my eyes open. The sun which enlightens me, discovers to me a great captain at the head of a company of soldiers, who speaks as if he were dreaming. He says, that he only came to the lake to smoke on the great calumet with the Onondagas. But *Garangula* says he sees the contrary; that it was to knock them on the head, if sickness had not weakened the arms of the French. I see Yonnondio raving in the camp of sick men, whose lives the *Great Spirit* has saved by inflicting this sickness on them.

Hear, Yonnondio! our women had taken their clubs, our children and old men had carried their bows and arrows into the heart of your camp, if our warriors had not disarmed them, and kept them back, when your messenger came to our castles. It is done, and I have said it.

Hear, Yonnondio!—We plundered none of the *French*, but those that carried guns, powder and balls to the *Twightwies* and *Chictaghicks*, because those arms might have cost us our lives. Herein we follow the example of the Jesuits, who break all the kegs of rum brought to our castles, lest the drunken Indians should knock them on the head. Our warriors have not beaver enough to pay for all the arms they have taken, and our old men are not afraid of the war. This belt preserves my words. We carried the English into our Lakes to trade there with the *Utawawas* and *Anatoyhies*, as the *Adirondacks* brought the French to our castles to carry on a trade which the English say is theirs. *We are born free. We neither depend on Yonnondio or Corlear* (name given to the Governors of New-York.) We may go where we please, and carry with us whom we please, and buy and sell what we please. If your allies be your slaves, use them as such, command them to receive no other but your people." When the words of *Garangula* were interpreted to *De La Barre*, stung with shame and incensed he left the council. Soon after, his troops disbanded and the haughty *Iroquois* exulted in this signal overthrow of the Governor's schemes.

The Marquis *De Nonville*, says *Smith* in his history, was a man of courage and of an enterprising spirit, and not a little animated by the consideration that he was sent over to repair the disgrace which his predecessor had brought upon the French Colony. By *Charlevoix* he is thus eulogized—"Egalement estimable pour sa valeur, sa droiture and sa piete." *La Fontaine* censures his acts while administering the government of New France, in violating the treaty at *Whitehall*, by invading the country of the *Senecas*, and denying the British title to the command of the Lake. In the language of *Smith*, "*De Nonville*, to prevent the interruption of the French trade

with the Twightwies, determined to carry the war into the country of the Five Nations. To that end he collected, in 1687, two thousand troops and six hundred Indians at Montreal, and issued orders to all the officers in the more westerly country to meet him at Niagara, on an expedition against the Senecas. * * * * *

The Five Nations, in the mean time, were preparing to give the French army a suitable reception.

The Marquis having embarked his whole army in canoes, set out from the fort at Cadaracqui, on the 23d of June, one-half of them passing along the north and the other on the south side of the Lake, and both arrived the same time at Tyrondequait, and shortly after set out on their march towards the chief village of the Senecas, at about seven leagues' distance. The main body was composed of the regulars and militia, the front and rear of the Indians and traders. The scouts advanced the second day of their march, as far as the corn of the village, and within pistol shot of five hundred Senecas who lay upon their bellies undiscovered. The French who imagined the enemy were all fled, quickened their march to overtake the women and old men. But no sooner had they reached the foot of a hill, about a mile from the village, than the Senecas raised the war-shout, and in the same instant charged upon the whole army, both in the front and rear. Universal confusion ensued. The battalions divided, fired upon each other and flew into the wood.

The Senecas improved the disorder of the enemy, till they were overpowered by the force of numbers and compelled to retreat. The Marquis was so much dispirited that he could not be persuaded to pursue the enemy that day; which gave the Senecas an opportunity to burn their village and get off. Traces of De Nonville's invasion are still visible upon the banks of the Genesee. Near the village of West Rush, Monroe County, the traveler and tourist can still see the ruins of a fortified encampment. Outlines of mortar bed, trench and mound are well defined. The author is in possession of fragments of gun and blade, picked up on the old battle field which lies at the foot of a hill on which the present village of Avon is situated.

It is a favorite haunt and play-place of the school boy, who is lured thither by the hope of finding flint or musket ball, hatchet or arrow-heads, disinterested by the plough, or washed to view by the drenching shower.

For the fierce Huron of Lorette,

And stern Algonquin of the north.—STANZA XIII.

The Hurons of Lorette were likewise called Onatoghies. The Adirondacks, or Algonquins drove the Iroquois from their hunting-grounds around Montreal, to the borders of the Lakes.

The latter having conquered the Satanas, under wise and warlike sachems adopted the plan of fighting their old enemies in small bands, instead of trusting the issue of war to a general engagement.

In turn the Adirondacks were conquered, though aided by the French arms, and the war-whoop of the Five Nations became the knell of surrounding tribes. The Niperceneans were nearly exterminated, and a wretched

remnant of them fled for safety to Hudson's Bay. "The borders of Outawas which were once thickly peopled, became almost deserted." West of the Alleghanies they carried their arms, and warred against most of the nations of the south. See Herriot, Canada, Smith, Thatcher, &c.

*A man of energy and will,
And priest of that strange order known
From clime to clime, and zone to zone.*—STANZA XV.

The immediate design of other religious societies was to separate their members from the world; that of the Jesuits, to render themselves *masters of it*. They were exempt from the usual functions of other monks, and were not required to spend their time in ceremonial offices and mummeries. The meanest talents were in requisition, and according to their own expression "the Jesuits have missionaries for the villages and martyrs for the Indians." Thus a peculiar energy was infused into their operations; which has been compared to a system of mechanism containing the greatest quality of power distributed to the greatest possible advantage. "The Jesuits," it was said with justice, "are a naked sword whose hilt is Rome." They propagated a system of the most relaxed morality, which accommodated itself to the passions of men, justified their vices, tolerated their imperfections. To persons of the stricter principles they studied to recommend themselves by the purity of their lives. While looking with a lenient eye on immoral practices, they were severe in exacting a strict orthodoxy in opinions. "They are a set of people," said the Abbe Boileau, "who lengthen the creed, and shorten the decalogue. One of their cardinal precepts was as follows: "Princes and distinguished persons must by all means be so managed that their *ears may be gained*, which will secure *their hearts*." They neither chaunted or prayed. "They cannot *sing*," said their enemies—"for *birds of prey never do*." D' Alembert, Mosheim, &c.

*Upraised the rod of mystic sway
In distant Ind and Paragua.*

"In the beginning of the 17th century they obtained from the court of Madrid, the grant of the large and fertile Province of Paragua, which stretches across the southern continent of America, from the mountains of Potosi to the banks of the river La Plata; and after every deduction which can reasonably be made from their own accounts, enough will remain, to excite astonishment and applause of mankind. By wise and humane policy they attracted converts, till at last they formed a powerful and well organized state of 300,000 families.

Industry was universal, want was unknown. Even the elegant arts began by degrees to appear, and full protection was provided against any invasion. An army of 60,000 men was completely armed, and regularly disciplined, consisting of cavalry, infantry and artillery, and well provided with magazines and munitions of war. It would be in vain to deny that mankind derived advantages from the labors of the Jesuits. Their ardor in improving the healing art, their skill in the instruction of youth and love of ancient literature, contributed to the progress of polite learning. Even the

debased species of Christianity which they introduced, was superior to the bloody rites of the savage." Edinburg Encyclopedia, vol. xi, p. 170.

*Like them he painted face and lip,
And robed his limbs in skin of beast.*—STANZA XVI.

The success of the Jesuits in making converts among the aboriginal population of this continent, was owing to a compliance, on their part, with savage customs. France, in extending her empire in America, was more aided by Jesuitical intrigue than force of arms. Notwithstanding the friendly relations that existed between the major portion of the Five Nations and the English, the crafty Jesuits made a diversion in favor of the crown of France, by sending their emissaries among them. "Devida et impera," was the French motto.

Father Joucaire was adopted by the Senecas, and was esteemed by the Onondagas. He lived among them after their manner, and spoke the Indian language, as Charlevoix informs us, "avec la plus, sublime éloquence Iroquoise."

CANTO II.

*And on her bosom brightly shone
An amulet of mystic stone.*—STANZA III.

"Among a people in the infancy of reflection and improvement, the deities themselves are not so much the objects of attention, as the great changes and revolutions of nature, to which they are conceived to give rise. To avert the calamities which threaten them, is, therefore, the chief concern of the rude tribes scattered over the American continent.

In order to effectuate this purpose, they have not recourse, as among nations more civilized, to prayers and penance, offerings and victims; but to charms, *amulets*, and incantations, which are fancied to have the power of saving them from all events of a disastrous nature." Edinburg Encyclopedia, vol. 1, p. 597.

The shambling elk shrill whistle gave.—STANZA VII.

Dr. Smith says, "the hunters assure us that the elk possesses the power, by strictly closing the nostrils, of forcing the air through these apertures (meaning a slit or depression below the inner angle of each eye called by French naturalists *larmiers*.) in such a manner as to make a noise which may be heard at a great distance." This however, is inaccurate; it is true that the elk, when alarmed, or his attention is strongly excited, makes a *whistling* noise at the moment these lachrymal appendages are opened, and vibrates in a peculiar manner. But having dissected these appendages in an elk, recently dead, we are perfectly assured that there is no communication between the nostrils of the animal and these sacs." Godman's Natural History, vol. ii, p. 298.

*And arrows bound by fearful tether
The skin of rattlesnake together.*—STANZA XI.

Many tribes of the continent, particularly the New-England Indians, were in the habit of sending messengers to kindred nations on the eve of

battle with a common enemy, bearing a sheaf of arrows bound together by the skin of the rattlesnake. The rude symbol was an invitation to dig up the hatchet.

Where the roar of the Upper Falls is heard.—STANZA XII.

"At Portageville, about fifteen miles from the angle at Caneadea, begin the great Portage Falls in this river. From the Upper Falls to Mount Morris and Squawkie Hill, a distance of sixteen miles, the river runs through a chasm, the sides of which are the greater part of the distance formed by solid and almost or quite perpendicular walls of rock, from two to four hundred feet high. In some places, however, these walls diverge so far from each other, as to allow spots of excellent alluvial flats to be formed on one side of the river or the other, and in some places on both.

Immediately above the Upper Falls, there exists all the appearance of a ridge of rock having once run across the river, in which case it would have raised the water some two hundred feet above its present level, and of course formed a lake from one to two miles wide, and extending back over the Caneadea and other flats, to Belvidere, a distance of twenty-eight or thirty miles; but if ever this was the case, the river has centuries ago cut through this ridge and formed considerable rapids where it stood, above and opposite Portageville. The river, after apparently cutting through this ridge, precipitates itself into the chasm below, by a somewhat broken, although what would be termed perpendicular fall of sixty feet. The stream at this place is about twelve rods wide, after which it flows through a chasm on a smooth rock bottom. Half a mile below the Upper Falls, the river (where it is about fifteen rods wide) again precipitates itself, in an unbroken sheet, one hundred and ten feet perpendicularly into a deeper channel, forming the "Middle Falls." The magnificence and beauty of these falls is not exceeded by anything in the state, except the cataract of Niagara.

On the west side of the river at the top of the falls, is a small flat piece of land, or rather rock, which can be approached down a ravine from the west, with any kind of carriage. The stream pursues its course in the same direction, pent within its rock-bound and precipitous shores, about two miles, where it takes its third and last leap in this vicinity, of ninety-three feet, into a still deeper chasm; the greater body of water falling on the eastern side, where a portion of it falls into a kind of hanging rock basin, about one-third of the distance down, and then takes another leap.

This fall can be approached on the east side by pedestrians with perfect safety. The river then pursues its north-eastern course through its deep and narrow channel to Gardow Flats, about five miles from the lower falls. The banks of the river, or rather the land bordering on the chasm, the greater portion of this distance, is covered with elegant white and Norway pine." MIX.

The mighty War-God of my race.

"Il paroît, madame, que dans ces chansons on invoque le dieu de la guerre, que les Hurons appellant *Areskouï* et les Iroquois *Agreskoue*. Je ne sai pas quel nom on lui donne dans les langues Algonquines."
"L' *Areskoni* des Hurons et l' *Agreskoue* des Iroquois est dans l'opinion de

ces peuples le souverain etre et le Dieu de la Guerre." Charlevoix, iii. 207—344.

Old Can-ne-hoot and chiefs convene:—STANZA XVII.

The name of the Indian hero, who figures in the author's poem, belongs to the stirring history of the period, though poetical license has been taken in ending his career with the battle; for he was present at a general council of the confederates holden at Onondaga, in January, 1690, as appears by the following extract from Thatcher. "Can-ne-hoot, the Seneca Sachem, next proceeded to give the council a particular account of a treaty made during the summer previous, between his own tribe and the Wayunhos."

Again that startling cry was heard.—STANZA XX.

By mimicking the cry of beast or bird, known to frequent the place from which the sound proceeds, an Indian scout communicates good or evil tidings to his tribe; when a party of warriors stop on their route to lie in ambush for enemies they understand to be out against them, they range themselves cautiously on both sides the expected path, frequently in a half moon line, and as far apart as they can hear the *travelling signal* from each other, which is either a low whistle, or cry of some wild creature of the woods imitated with surprising accuracy. See Adair and Charlevoix.

Tall orchards near the river-shore,

The germs of bright abundance bore.—STANZA XXII.

The remains of an extensive Indian orchard may still be seen on the western bank of the Genesee. The wind-bowed and mossy trunks have a desolate appearance, as if they shared in the miseries of the race who planted them. The early settlers of Avon, discovered peach-trees growing in the forest on the site of an old cornfield of the Indians, the fruit of which was of good flavor.

A rugged structure low and long.—STANZA XXIII.

A few years since, the council house at Cannewaugus, was standing. When last visited by the author, it was in a state of decay—the roof, overlaid with bark, was falling in, and the storm had partly beaten down the walls. The building was low and about sixty feet in length. In the centre of the roof, which was bark bent to a rounded form over the ridge pole, was an open place for the escape of smoke when the elders of the tribe were convened in grave deliberation. The confederation of the Iroquois, stretching from the Hudson to Lake Erie, was often compared by their orators to a council house. In the speech of condolence, addressed by the Mohawk chiefs to the inhabitants of Albany, after the destruction of Schenectady, the perfidy of the French is thus portrayed. "Brethren, we do not think that what the French have done can be called a victory: it is only a farther proof of their cruel deceit: the Governor of Canada sent to Onondaga, and talks to us of peace with our *whole house*; but war was in his heart, as you now see by woful experience. He did the same, formerly at Cadaracqui, and in the Seneca's country. This is the third time he has acted so deceitfully

He has broken open our house at both ends; formerly in the Senecas' country, and now here. We hope, however, to be revenged of them."

*The chichikon, full loudly blown,
Gave out lugubrious monotone.*

The chichikon is formed of a thick cane upwards of two feet in length, with eight or nine holes, and a mouth-piece not unlike that of a common whistle.

From some, on crimson hoop extended.—STANZA XXVI.

Scalps preserved as trophies of victory, were cured, hooped and painted by the Indians with marks on the *flesh side* expressive of the age and sex of the slain. In the letter of James Crawford to Col. Haldiman, Governor of Canada, appended to Stone's Life of Brant, is a description of eight packages of scalps taken by the Seneca Indians from the inhabitants of New-York. To denote scalps taken from farmers killed in their houses, the skin was painted brown and marked with a hoe—a black circle signified that they were surprised in the night, and a black hatchet in the middle that they were killed with that weapon. The hair on the scalps of the women was braided in the Indian fashion, to show that they were mothers. The hoops were blue, skin yellow ground, with little red tadpoles, to represent, by way of triumph, the tears of grief occasioned to their relations. Seventeen gray-haired scalps were stretched on black hoops of brown color, with no mark but the short club or cassetete, to show they were knocked down dead, or had their brains beaten out!

*For daggers wrought of flint and bone,
With fell intent were round him bared.*—STANZA XXVIII.

The ancient dagger of the Senecas was an implement, shaped, with great labor, from bone and flint. The author is in possession of one made of the latter material, the blade of which, after swelling in the middle, tapers to a rugged point. Bone daggers have been found in Lima, Livingston County, by citizens while working on the highway, shaped with elegance, and elaborately polished.

CANTO III.

Wake, children of Ge-nun-de-wah!

The tradition of the Seneca Indians, in regard to their birth, is that they broke out of the earth from a large mountain at the head of Canandaigua Lake, and that mountain they still venerate as the place of their birth; thence they derive their name, "Ge-nun-de-wah," or Great Hill, and are called "The Great Hill People," which is the true definition of the word Seneca. The great hill at the head of Canandaigua Lake from whence they sprung, is called Ge-nun-de-wah, and has for a long time past been the place where the Indians of that nation met in council, to hold great talks, and to offer up prayers to the Great Spirit, on account of its having been their birth-place; and also in consequence of the destruction of a serpent

at that place in ancient time, in a most miraculous manner, which threatened the whole of the Senecas, and barely spared enough to commence replenishing the earth. The Indians say that the Fort on the Big Hill or Ge-nun-de-wah, near the head of Canandaigua Lake, was surrounded by a monstrous serpent, whose head and tail came together at the gate. A long time it lay there, confounding the people with its breath. At length they attempted to make their escape, some with their homminy-blocks, and others with different implements of household furniture; and in marching out of the Fort, walked down the throat of the serpent. Two orphan children, who had escaped this general destruction by being left some time before on the outside of the Fort, were informed by an oracle, of the means by which they could get rid of their formidable enemy; which was, to take a small bow and a poisoned arrow, made of a kind of willow, and with that shoot the serpent under its scales. This they did, and the arrow proved effectual; for on its penetrating the skin, the serpent became sick, and, extending itself, rolled down the hill, destroying all the timber that was in its way. At every motion a human head was discharged, and rolled down the hill into the lake, where they lie at this day in a petrified state, having the hardness and appearance of stones; and the pagan Indians of the Senecas believe that all the little snakes were made of the blood of the great serpent after it rolled into the lake. To this day the Indians visit that sacred place to mourn the loss of their friends, and to celebrate some rites that are peculiar to themselves. To the knowledge of white people there has been no timber on the Great Hill since it was first discovered by them, though it lay apparently in a state of nature for a great number of years, without cultivation. Stones in the shape of Indians' heads may be seen lying in the lake in great plenty, which are said to be the same that were deposited there at the death of the serpent." *Life of Mary Jemison.*

Some, from long pipes of purple stain,

Significant of battle, smoked.—STANZA III.

"The calumet and all its ornaments, when they treat of war, are painted red. The size of the pipe and the degree of decoration correspond to the importance of the occasion." *Indian Wars.* When war is contemplated, the tomahawk is also colored with red.

On bosoms bare the figures rude

Of wolf and turtle were tattoo'd.—STANZA IV.

Each Indian nation has a distinct ensign, generally consisting of some beast, bird or fish; and the pictures of these animals are pricked or painted on the arms or breast. The known mark of a tribe or chief on the person of a captive, is a protection from danger at other hands. Brant, at the destruction of Cherry Valley, saved a woman and her children by painting his cognizance upon them. See *Stone's Life of Brant.* "Each of the Five Nations is divided into three families of different ranks, bearing for their arms, and being distinguished by the names of the tortoise, the bear and the wolf." *SMITH.* "Sometimes the design of a military expedition is painted on the naked trunk of a tree. By a deer, a fox or some other emblems, we discover against what nation they are gone out." *SMITH.*

*He swears like them no fear to know
When stake-bound by exulting foe.*—STANZA V.

"It is the first and the last study of the American Indians, to acquire the faculty of suffering with an obstinate and heroic courage when their fortitude is put to the proof. They harden their fibres by repeated trials, and accustom themselves to endure the most tormenting pain without a groan or a tear. In the northern division of the Continent, a boy and a girl will put a flaming coal between their naked arms, and vie with another in maintaining it in its place. (CHARLEVOIX III. 307.) "Forbear," said an aged chief of the Iroquois to the French Indians, "forbear these stabs of your knife; and rather let me die by fire, that those dogs, your allies, may learn, by my example, to suffer like men."

His arm, with grace unstudied, raised.—STANZA VI.

"Their speakers deliver themselves with surprising force, and great propriety of gesture. The fierceness of their countenances, the flowing blanket, elevated tone, naked arm and erect stature, with a half circle of auditors seated on the ground, and in the open air, cannot but impress upon the mind a lively idea of the ancient orators of Greece and Rome." SMITH.

The prowling Eries of the Lake.—STANZA VII.

The career of victory which began with the fall of the Adirondacks, was destined to be extended beyond all precedent in the history of the Indian tribes. They (the Iroquois) exterminated the Eries or Erigas, once living on the south side of the lake of their own name. They nearly destroyed the powerful Anderstetz, and the Chouanons or Showanons. They drove back the Hurons and Ottawas among the Sioux of the Upper Mississippi, where they separated themselves into bands, "proclaiming, wherever they went, the terror of the Iroquois." HERRICK.

*And a slow dance, with measured tread,
Around the painted war-post led.*—STANZA XI.

"When war is the result of their deliberations, a chief marches round in a circle, inviting those who are for war to join in the circuitous march, while a war-song serves to rouse their patriotic zeal to the highest pitch, till the whole assembly, kindling into the same ardor, becomes impatient to be led against the enemy." The following list of the dances in use among the North American Indians, has been given by Mr. Long:—

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. The Calumet Dance. | 6. The Dead Dance. |
| 2. The War Dance, | 7. The Prisoner's Dance, |
| 3. The Chief's Dance, | 8. The Return Dance, |
| 4. The Set out Dance, | 9. The Spear Dance, |
| 5. The Scalp Dance, | 10. The Marriage Dance, |
| 11. The Sacrifice Dance. | |

Of these, the war dance is the most remarkable, and is frequently composed of several of the other dances. It is the exact image of an Indian campaign. It represents the departure of their warriors, their arrival at the confines of the hostile nation, their method of encampment, the attack, the

scalping of such as fall into their hands, the return of the victorious tribe, and the tortures and heroism of the prisoners. In performing these parts, the savages exhibit a wonderful dexterity; and enter into them with such enthusiasm, that European spectators have forgotten for a moment that it was only a representation, and have shuddered at the imaginary scene. See Lafitan, Charlevoix 5.

With our totem crased by the knife.—STANZA XII.

For cowardice in battle, an Indian is condemned to lose his totem, a punishment more to be dreaded than a lingering torture at the stake, be deprived of his name, and live a drudge in the lodge of some warrior, clad in the petticoat of a squaw.

While scalps on red pole by the bravest are borne.

In returning from a successful expedition, the bravest warrior of the band bears the scalps, stretched over hoops, and elevated upon a long red pole. See Life of Mary Jemison, p. 39.

On-gui-hon-wi unite in one legion of dread.

"And they were, indeed, at all times ready (the Iroquois) and willing to cherish the sentiment of exaltation which they felt: they called themselves "*On-gui-hon-wi*," that is, men surpassing all others CLINTON.

In view arose a gloomy square.—STANZA XVIII.

"Whenever a considerable number of huts are collected, they have a castle, as it is called, consisting of a square without bastions, surrounded with palisadoes. They have no other fortification; and this is only designed as an asylum for their old men, their wives and children, while the rest are gone out to war." Smith.

The wealth of that enchanted isle,

Chased vainly on the waters blue.—STANZA XIX.

"They further say that these hunters had a view of the settlements of this peculiar Indian race, whose women are incomparably beautiful, situated on the banks of an island, a terrestrial paradise, in a beautiful lake; but that in their endeavors to approach it, they were in perpetual labyrinths, and, like enchanted land, still as they imagined they had first gained it, it seemed to fly before them, alternately appearing and disappearing." Bartram's Travels.

Long as that martial lock of hair

Streams like a flag in troubled air.—STANZA XX.

The same chivalrous principle of action that prompts the civilized soldier to preserve the colors of his regiment from the disgrace of capture, incites the red forest warrior, though faint with a death-wound, to preserve his scalp from drying in the lodge of an enemy. This trait of Indian character is well illustrated by the personal combat, in Cooper's Prairie, between Mahtoree and Hard Heart. The latter having received a mortal wound, with a last effort plunges into the stream, hoping vainly that the tide would rob his Pawnee foe of the trophy that he so much craved.

May Utco bear to realms of night.—STANZA XXIII.

The author's mother, who speaks the Seneca fluently, informed him that by using the term *Utco*, the Indian referred to the diabolical power from which witches and wizards derive their spirit of mischief. This Great Doer of Evil dwells in an abode of darkness, and controls a countless number of subordinate ministers of ill who must daily perform their allotted tasks—some sowing the seeds of disease and death, while others bring blight to the corn-field, scare the deer, and derange the hunter's aim.

CANTO IV.

Romans of the West !

The Iroquois bore this proud appellation, not only by conquest over other tribes, but by encouraging the people of other nations to incorporate with them ; "a Roman principle," says Thatcher, "recognized in the practice as well as theory of these lords of the forest."

*While well the hindmost of the line**From view concealed betraying sign.*—STANZA V.

The wonderful sagacity of the North American savage on a march, or pursuit of foe through a forest, is too well known to require much comment. On emergency, they put the hinder part of their snow shoes forward, so that if their footsteps should happen to be observed by a vigilant enemy, it might be supposed they had taken a contrary direction. "Sometimes they fix the broad hoofs of buffaloes or bears' paws upon their feet, to deceive the foe ; and for miles together, they will make all the customary windings of those animals in the woods. The warrior who brings up the rear, lifts to a natural position the broad grass, and 'they march, one man behind the other, treading carefully in each other's steps, so that their number may not be ascertained by the prints of their feet.'" HECKEWELDER.

*Where light pirogues of whitewood lay,**Fashioned and hollowed out alone**By eating fire and gouge of stone.*

Their canoes were of two kinds : one was made of a large log excavated, the inside burned and wrought by a stone gouge, and the outside shaped by their stone axe. The second kind was made of birchen bark. "The pirogues or war canoes of the Indians are constructed by hollowing the trunks of large trees with much labor and patience ; and, notwithstanding their bulk and gravity, they are moved dexterously through the water. The pirogue is often large enough to contain fifty persons ; and in most instances, the workmanship is so neat, and the ornaments so splendid, as to be thought utterly beyond the execution of savages ignorant of the harder metals. The trunk of a tree which they have cut down, and which they design to form into a canoe, often begins to rot before their labor is at an end. Their chisel was of stone, sharpened to an edge. Ignorant of iron, their hatchets and axes were made of stone. Their use dictated a similar shape

to ours. A young sapling was split near the ground, the head of the axe thrust into it, and a handle formed with inconsiderable labor. See Gumilla, Lafitan, Mœurs ii. 213, and Indian Wars.

*His favorite hound, of courage tried,
And weapons buried by his side.*—STANZA X.

"They bury with the dead, food, bows and arrows, pipes and whatsoever pleased them while living, or might be necessary in the country of souls. They believe in the immortality of the soul, without the aid of metaphysics. The *Chicung*, the *shadow*, that which survives the body, they grossly imagine, will, at death, go into some unknown but curious place." Indian Wars.

They give the first place in the land of spirits to the courageous warrior who has put to death the greatest number of his enemies, and to the hunter who has distinguished himself the most in the exertions of the chase; and it is their practice to bury the hatchet and the bow of a leader in the same grave with his body, that he may not be destitute of arms when he enters upon the future world. They likewise deposit in his tomb the skins and stuffs of which their garments are made, corn, venison, drugs, utensils and animals of different kinds, and whatever else they hold to be necessary or convenient in their simple estimate of life." De La Potherie and Col-den, Five Nations, i. 17.

"The Omaha Chief, Black-bird, after death, was placed erect on his war-horse, and, followed by the braves he had often led to battle, conveyed to his sepulchre on a high bluff overlooking the Missouri. The horse, alive, was forced into the grave with his dead rider, and thus inhumed." Appendix to the Gazetteer of Missouri.

Some tribes erect a scaffold, by planting four large stakes in the ground, eight feet high, and five by three apart, across the tops of which are laid poles, on which the bark coffin, enclosing the body, rests. A correspondent of the New-Yorker thus alludes to a scaffold of this description. "A few years since, a sarcophagus was erected on the west bank of Rock River, about two miles below the junction of the Pecatonic, wherein was laid an Indian girl. It remained till about a year since, when decay and the winds swept it away, and left nothing but the stakes on which it was reared, which are yet standing."

*With war-club thickly notched, that told
How mighty were the men of old.*—STANZA XIII.

The Indian warrior cuts scalp-notches upon the handle of his hatchet, significant of the number of enemies that he has slain. "In order to commemorate great events and preserve the chronology of them, the war-chief in each tribe keeps a war-post. This post is a peeled stick of timber, ten or twelve feet high, that is erected in the town. For a campaign, they make, or rather the chief makes, a perpendicular red mark, about three inches long and half an inch wide; on the opposite side of this, for a scalp, they make a red cross, thus †; on another side, for a prisoner taken alive, they make a red cross, in this manner, ✕, with a head or dot; and by placing such significant hieroglyphics in so conspicuous a situation, they are ena-

bled to ascertain, with great certainty, the time and circumstances of past events. Hiokattoo had a war-post on which were recorded his military exploits, and other things that he thought worth preserving." Life of Mary Jemison.

*And the lone muckawiss was heard,
That solemn and prophetic bird.*—STANZA XV.

The Indian name for the whippowil, says Carver, is "*muckawiss*." "As soon as night comes on, these birds will place themselves on the fences, stumps or stones that lie near some house, and repeat their melancholy notes, without any variation, till midnight. The Indians and some of the inhabitants of the back settlements think if this bird perches upon any house, that it betokens some mishap to the inhabitants of it." CARVER.

The march in long and ordered line.—STANZA XVIII.

"They march in a line of individual warriors, and preserve a dead silence." Some of the Indian nations resemble the Tartars in the construction of their canoes, implements of war and the chase, with the well-known habit of marching in Indian file." Priest's Amer. Antiq.

*Mickinac sate on a fallen tree,
And of savory nokehike partook.*—STANZA XXX.

"We retain some Indian modes of cookery. Their green corn, when either roasted or boiled, is excellent. Their hommony consists of corn bruised and soaked or boiled. Their *nokehike* is parched corn pounded. Suckatash, a mixture of green corn and beans, is become a very common dish. Upaquontop is the head of a bass boiled, and the broth thickened with hommony, which is one of their richest delicacies." Indian Wars.

Go home, and look for Mickinac!—STANZA XXXI.

"The first principle which is instilled into the breast of a savage, is revenge. Time cannot efface the remembrance of an injury; it is cherished and kept alive with the most studious care; like the hereditary feuds of Scottish clans, it even goes down from one generation to another, with all its associated feelings, and with these feelings in all their exercise. The blood of the offender can alone expiate the transgression. If the domain appropriated to hunting be invaded, or if an individual of a tribe be cut off, the desire of vengeance swells in every breast with instinctive emotion, and instantly kindles into rage. It sparkles in every eye, and gives activity to every limb. Months and years roll away, and the purpose of vengeance continues deep in the heart, and it shows itself in *tremendous execution when it is least expected or feared*. The Indian fights, not less to satiate his revenge, than to conquer his enemies; and that destructive passion is not gratified till he has glutted himself with the blood of the hostile tribe, and rejoiced in the extinction of its name. Even the women seem to be animated with this destructive and restless principle." Edinburg Encyclopedia, vol. i. p. 591.

And a low, mournful death-hymn sang.

CANTO V.

On the creek's bottom then he strode.—STANZA VI.

When opportunity offers, on a retreat, the Indian warrior walks in the bed of streams, for he well knows that a savage enemy upon his trail will pursue the traces of man and beast, by observing with acuteness the disposition of the grass and leaves. "Some of the French missionaries have supposed that the Indians are *guided by instinct*, and have pretended that Indian children can find their way through a forest as easily as a person of mature years; but this is a most absurd notion. It is unquestionably by a close attention to the growth of the trees and position of the sun, that they find their way. On the northern side of a tree there is generally the most moss; and the bark on that side, in general, differs from that on the opposite one. The branches toward the south are, for the most part, more luxuriant than those on the other sides of trees; and several other distinctions subsist between the northern and southern sides, conspicuous to Indians, being taught from their infancy to attend to them, which a common observer would, perhaps, never notice. Being accustomed from their infancy, likewise, to pay great attention to the position of the sun, they learn to make the most accurate allowance for its apparent motion from one part of the heavens to another; and in every hour of the day, they will point to the part of the heavens where it is, although the sky be obscured by clouds or mists." WELD.

*A hill once strongly fortified,
Down sloping to the water-side.*—STANZA VIII.

The hill referred to in the text, is situated on the banks of the Conesus Creek, and is called "Fort Hill" by the inhabitants. The first settlers of the country say that it was an open place in the heart of the forest, with trench, mound and gateway plainly visible. The sloping sides of the hill are filled with human bones that lie white and undecayed in loose yellow sand. Implements of quaint form, and ornaments in the shape of squares and half moons, marked with hieroglyphics, also an urn-like vessel, were found, after a severe tempest, in a deep hollow, made by the uprooting of an oak. Skulls have been disinterred near by, of sufficient size to encase the head of a full-grown man, and must have belonged to a race of larger proportions even, than the gigantic Indians of Patagonia. In company with his friend Mr. Harry Thomson, who takes a deep interest in the subject of Indian antiquities, the author visited this site of an ancient fortification, after the plough had passed over it, and succeeded in finding many curious beads, some formed from the horns of deer, fragments of pottery and pipes, on the bowls of which the heads of fox, frog and wolf were ingeniously carved.

*And on a tongue of land arrived,
Outstretching far into the mere,
An emerald set in crystal clear.*—STANZA XII.

There is a favorite place of resort for pic-nic parties, called Long Point, that stretches out into the silvery Conesus, a few miles from Lakeville.

It is covered with oaks of stately growth, and in their shade rustic benches and tables have been erected for the accommodation of visitors. All lovers of the romantic owe a debt of gratitude to the tasteful proprietor, the venerable James Wadsworth, Esquire, for preserving this natural park from the desecrating axe.

Aboriginal remains, well worthy of minute examination, may be seen near the lake beach. The face of the ground has evidently been altered by the hand of art; and timber, in a remarkable state of preservation, has been discovered, four or five feet below the surface, in places where the loose soil of the bank has crumbled away. The blue hills in the distance, partly clothed with the primitive forest—the waters kissing the shore with an undertone of melody—the plunge of fish and flap of waterfowl—the pleasant murmur of the wind-swept trees mingling with the carol of sinless birds, are ministers of repose and pleasure to a mind that has been wounded by the “briers of this work-day world.” It is a bright, sequestered spot, and the fabling fancy of Greece peopled haunts less picturesque, with Happy Spirits—a green retreat where the retired poet could wear out life, and which the wayfarer passes by with reluctance, through fear his eye will never rest again on sight so beautiful.

Who from foul shame an Indian spared.—STANZA XV.

The Indian never forgets the individual who befriends him. Gratitude is as deeply rooted in his breast, as the remembrance of a wrong. In the language of Judge Story, “if he had the vices of savage life, he had the virtues also. He was true to his country, his friends and his home. If he forgave not injury, neither did he forget kindness. If his vengeance was terrible, his fidelity and generosity were unconquerable also. *His love, like his hate*, stopped not on this side of the grave.”

When shrieked the solitary loon.—STANZA XVI.

The loon, or great northern diver—“*L'imbrim ou grand plongeon de la mer de nord de Buffon*,” is regarded, in some parts of the country, as a bird of ill omen. The loon is said to be restless before a storm; and an experienced master of a coasting vessel informs me, that he always knew when a tempest was approaching, by the cry of this bird, which is very shrill, and may be heard the distance of a mile or more. Wilson's Ornithology.

An instant flashed the knife on high.—STANZA XXV.

Lest the reader might think probability violated by making Wun-nut-hay the stern author of a bloody deed, the following extract from an article on the North American Indians, to be found in vol. I. of the Edinburg Encyclopedia, is introduced :

“The Algonquins being at war with the Iroquois, a woman of the former nation happened to be made prisoner, and was carried to one of the villages belonging to the latter. Here she was stripped naked; and her hands and feet were bound with ropes in one of their cabins. In this condition she remained for ten days, the savages sleeping around her every night. On the eleventh night, when they were asleep, she found means to disengage

one of her hands; and freeing herself from the ropes, she went immediately to the door of the hut where she was lodged. Though she had now an opportunity of escaping unperceived, her revengeful temper could not let slip so favorable an opportunity of killing one of her enemies. The attempt was manifestly at the hazard of her own life; yet, seizing a hatchet, she plunged it into the head of a savage who lay next her, and fled."

*Weary with flight, her agile form
Against a hemlock stem she leaned.*—STANZA XXX.

When fatigued with the toils of the chase, or requiring rest on a perilous march, the red man goes on his way refreshed after a brief sleep with his back to a tree, in a leaning posture. "For several successive nights the warrior did not sleep, only when he reclined, as usual, a little before day, with his back to a tree." Adair's General Observations on the American Indians.

By vapory phantoms of the dead.

The Indians religiously believe, that their old burial places and battle-fields are visited nightly by the stalking ghosts of the dead; also that the footsteps of the murderer are dogged by the restless shadow of the slain. "Friends," said the tall chief to his blood-stained tribesmen, "you have killed an Indian in a time of peace, and made the wind hear his groans, and the earth drink his blood. You are bad Indians! Yes, you are very bad Indians; and what can you do? If you go into the woods to live alone, the ghost of John Jemison will follow you, crying, blood! blood! and will give you no peace! If you go to the land of your nation, there the ghost will attend you, and say to your relatives, See my murderers! If you plant, it will blast your corn; if you hunt, it will scare your game; and when you are asleep, its groans and the sight of an avenging tomahawk will awake you!" On the banks of the bright trout stream that flows through the farm of John McKay, Esquire, at Caledonia, was a "*place of torture*," called "*Can-ec-a-di*" in the Seneca dialect. The Indians have a tradition that groans proceed from this memorable spot at midnight, and that ghastly shapes peering through the leaves, have often frightened the belated hunter.

I was informed by Captain Jones, that the wild glen at Fall Brook, near Geneseo, has been the scene of a tragic story, and that the place is haunted, after nightfall, by a frightful, headless spectre. The Indians believe that it is a spot accursed; but the tourist looks with delight upon a scene where beauty contends for mastery with the sublime.

CANTO VI.

Stained like the brush and leaves around them.—STANZA IV.

"They paint their bodies of the same color with the leaves and brush, and lie close to the ground all day."

Like figures carved from granite gray.—STANZA V.

The savage of America, when lying in ambush, endures the pangs of hunger and thirst without complaint or motion. "His eyes like those of the Argus, see every thing, his ears hear every sound, and all his senses employed show that his soul is as active as his body is passive." Indian Wars.

*Taught by the Jesuit to pray,
With hand imbrued in human gore.*—STANZA VI.

"The French priests boast indeed of their converts, but they have made more proselytes to politics than religion." Smith's History of N. Y. p. 76.

"To their former motives were now added, not only a thirst for revenge, but also an enthusiastic frenzy inspired from the Romish religion. The French priests even went with the savages, as greater barbarians, to say mass amidst the holy work of massacre." Indian Wars.

Of proven valor was the chief.—STANZA VIII.

"The Marquis De Nonville was distinguished as a brave and active officer." Murray's British America, vol. i. p. 183.

*Well might their general declare
Eye never looked on vale more fair.*—STANZA XIII.

The valley of the Genesee, though romantic and wild at and around the Upper Falls, is more remarkable for the quiet beauty of its landscape than for startling sublimity. "The alluvial flats through which the river meanders, are from one to two miles in width, as level as a placid lake, and as fertile, to say the least, as any land in this state. Thousands of acres of these flats were cleared of their timber when Indian tradition commences their description. These flats are encompassed on each side by a rolling country gradually rising as it recedes from the river, but in no place so abrupt as to merit the cognomen of a hill. This was the terrestrial paradise of the Senecas, and to this tract they gave the name of Gen-ish-a-u, Chen-ne-se-co, Gen-ne-se-o or Gen-ne-see, as pronounced by the different Indian Tribes, and being interpreted, all meaning substantially the same, to wit: shining, clear opening—pleasant, clear opening—clear valley, or pleasant open valley."

*Oft would some scout thick top of tree
His screened observatory make.*—STANZA XV.

"Their grand object, however, is to surprise a village, and, if possible, the principal one belonging to the hated tribe. Thither all their steps tend, as they steal like silent ghosts through the lonely forest. On approaching it, they cast hasty glances from the tops of trees, or hillocks, and then retreat into the thickest covert." MURRAY.

*The pictured outlines of a man
Transfixed by dart, by hatchet cleft.*—STANZA XVIII.

By a few rude images on the bark of trees, they communicate to others whatsoever intelligence they deem important. "There are some Indian

Gazettes. On a tree in Moultonboro' is carved a history of one of their expeditions. The number of the killed and captivated were represented by so many human figures. The stroke of a knife across the throat designated the killed. Even the sexes had some intelligible mark of distinction.

They use many ingenious expedients to communicate their ideas to their absent friends. By erecting a pole and marking its shadow on the sand, or pointing it so as to cast no shadow, they are able to inform their followers, at what time of the day they were in such a place, and by lopping down a few bushes they clearly intimate which way they are gone."

"In Kellyvale, is yet to be seen something like an attempt to painting. The bark of a large tree is stripped off as high as a man can reach; with a stain of a lively color, an Indian with a gun is painted, with his face towards the north. Beside him, is a representation of a skeleton sketched with a considerable degree of anatomical exactness. The whole is a kind of gazette, in which the Indian informs his company which was to follow him, that one of their number was dead, and that the survivor was proceeding with safety on his way to Canada." Indian Wars.

*The ponderous war-club's weighty stroke,
Clubbed gun-stocks into pieces broke.*—STANZA XXIII.

Their weapons of war are very few. Their war-club was formed out of a root, or limb of a tree, made into a convenient shape, with a knot at one end, of use in case of close engagement with an enemy. A stake hardened in the fire at one end, was used as a sort of spontoon, useful in destroying an enemy, or keeping him at a little distance. Their lance was pointed with a flint or a bone. A war-club was sometimes used, with a blade like the spear of a lance inserted in the side near the upper end of it. Col. Stone, in his life of Brant, alludes to one with marks on its handle denoting the number of persons killed, and scalps taken by the means of it.

*Warned by a runner of his band
That Yonnondio was at hand.*—STANZA XXXIII.

"Their orator came forward and addressed the Governor General by the title of Ononthio (or Yonnondio,) which, in their language, signifies great mountain; and though it was in reference to his name of Montmagny, they continued ever after to apply this term to the French viceroy. They often added the respectful appellation of Father." Murray's British America, vol. i. p. 166.

*Dark fingers in his hair enwreathed,
Secured by aid of teeth and knife,
Grim, reddened trophies of the strife.*—STANZA XXXV.

Placing a foot on the neck of his fallen enemy, and twisting a hand in the hair, the warrior draws a long, sharp-pointed knife, specially formed for this operation; then cutting a circle around the crown of the head, by a few skilful scoops, sometimes aided by the teeth, the hair and skin are detached. See Charlevoix, Rogers' Concise Account and Adair.

*Reserved for torture at the stake,
By tribesmen filled with rage and grief,
That glad the wandering ghost would make
Of Can-ne-hoot their fallen chief.*—STANZA XL.

In the dreadful work of torture the women take the lead, and seem transformed into raging furies. She, to glut whose vengeance the doom has been specially pronounced, invokes the spirit of her husband, her brother, or her son, who has fallen in battle, or died amid torture, bidding him come now and be appeased.

CANTO VII.

*Thickly the Senecas o'erspread,
With hiding brush and leaves, their dead.*—STANZA I.

It is a custom with Indian warriors to conceal their losses from the enemy. They exert themselves to the utmost to prevent their slain from falling into hostile hands. Even while the battle is raging, old Indian fighters have seen

“Figures of men that crouch and creep unheard,
And bear away the dead.”

*While rose from forest edge a cry,
Now plaintive low—now shrill and high.*—STANZA III.

At the close of the expedition, the warriors repair to their village, and, in approaching, announce its results by various signals well understood among their families. According to the most approved custom, the evil tidings are first communicated. A herald advances before the troop, and for every kinsman who has fallen, sounds the death-whoop, a shrill, lengthened note, ending in an elevated key.

An interval is then allowed, during which the burst of grief excited by their tidings, may be in some degree exhausted. Then rises the loud, quavering sound of the war-whoop, which by its successive repetitions expressed the number of captives brought home as the fruits of victory.

The barbarous joy thus kindled, banishes for the moment all trace of lamentation. See Adair, Charlevoix.

“There was no prisoner put to the torture, or attired in the raven death-cap on this occasion, but the prisoners were paraded, and the scalps borne in the procession, as would have been the standard taken in civilized warfare in the celebration of a triumph. For every scalp and for every prisoner taken, the scalp-yell, or as it is sometimes called the “death halloo,” was raised in all its mingled tones of triumph and terror.” Stone’s Life of Brant.

The imitative powers of the red man almost exceed belief. On one occasion, says Champlain, they constructed a wooden enclosure of a triangular form, each side nearly a mile long, with a narrow opening at the point, into which, by loud cries, and imitating the howling of wolves, they contrived to drive all the deer in the vicinity.

For lord had Can-ne-wau-gus lost.—STANZA V.

In the Seneca dialect, the word Cannewaugus means "*stinking water*." It was the aboriginal name of the far-famed Avon Springs, the medical properties of which have been found unsurpassed in the cure of various diseases. On the east side of the Genesee, near the old site of Cannewaugus, the pleasant village of West Avon crowns an elevated ridge of land, environed by romantic scenery, and overlooking the river's green and quiet valley.

*He calls upon yon captive pale,
The briers from his path to clear.*—STANZA VIII.

The relatives of a fallen warrior often demand of their tribe the immediate execution of a captive, to appease his troubled ghost, and clear away the briers, for his safe passage to the hunting-grounds of the happy.

*Tormentors drew his foot upon
The fatal bear-skin moccason,
And flaming torch placed o'er his head.*—STANZA X.

"The captive is informed of his fate by being invested with moccasins of black bear's skin, and having placed over his head a flaming torch, the sure indications of his doom.

Before the fatal scene begins, however, he is allowed a short interval to sing his death-song, which he performs in a triumphant tone.

He proclaims the joy with which he goes to the land of souls, where he will meet his brave ancestors, who taught him the great lesson to fight and the greater one to suffer.

He recounts his war-like exploits,* particularly those performed against the kindred of his tormentors; and if there was any one of them whom he vanquished and caused to expire amid tortures, he loudly proclaims it. He declares his inextinguishable desire to cut their flesh, and to drink their blood to the last drop. The scene is considered, even when compared to the field of battle, as the great theatre of Indian glory. When two prisoners were about to be tortured by the French at Quebec, a charitable hand privately supplied a weapon with which one of them killed himself; but the other derided his effeminacy, and proudly prepared himself for the fiery trial." Murray's *British America*, vol. i. p. 120.

*Though wearing still the pallid shade
By fathers caught from ocean's spray.*—STANZA XVII.

The red-man believes that the first parents of the pale race sprang from the foam of the salt water.

*And Can-ne-hoot on him conferred
A name that rings like battle-word.*

They are exceedingly bigoted as to names. They give themselves those which are very expressive, denoting some interesting object in nature, or some historical event. They change their own names, as new events present occasions. They are much pleased when the white people assign them names; and in return they select names for their white friends, which are

strikingly significant of some prominent trait in their character, shewing that they are critical observers of human nature. "The Indians wear, by way of amulet or charm, the feathers of certain birds whose names they bear, believing that they confer on the wearer all the virtues or excellencies of those birds."

A right war-captive to demand.—STANZA XXII.

The survivors of the slain, may demand revenge for their loss, or solicit that the captives be spared to supply the vacancy. The stranger, being received into one of the families as a husband, brother or son, is treated with the utmost tenderness. Those who perhaps immediately before exhausted their ingenuity in tormenting him, now nurse the wounds they have made, and load him with caresses.

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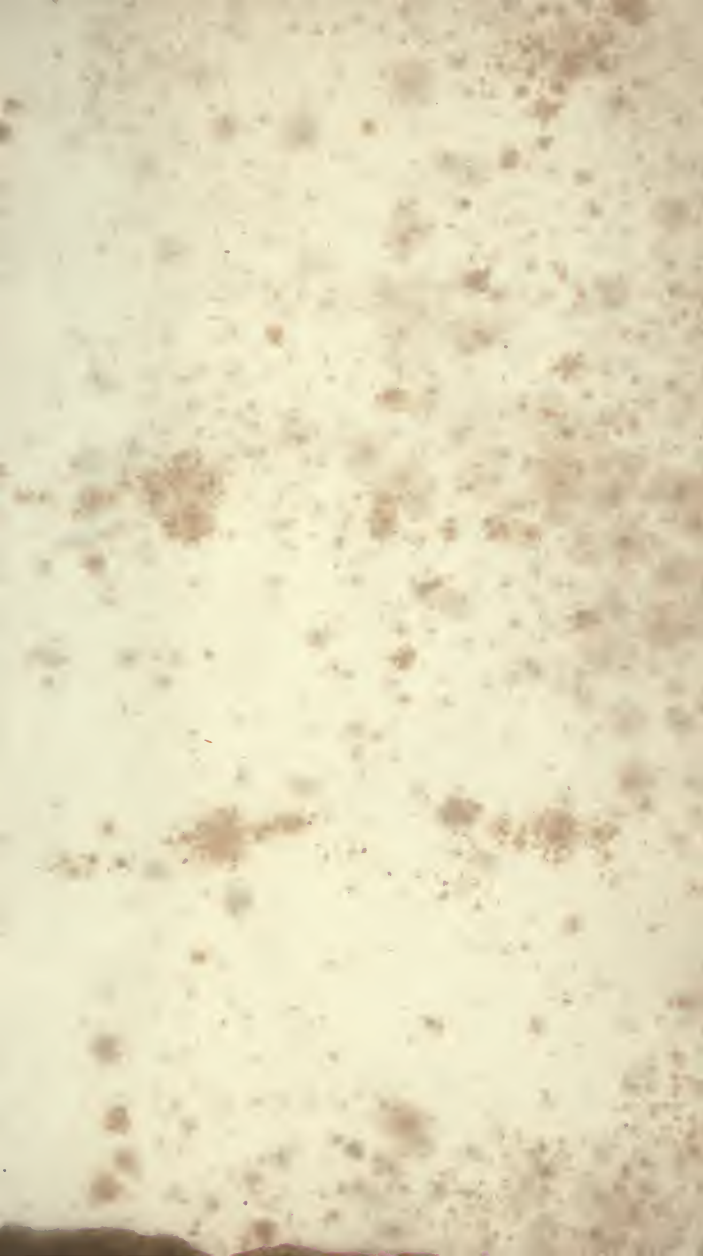
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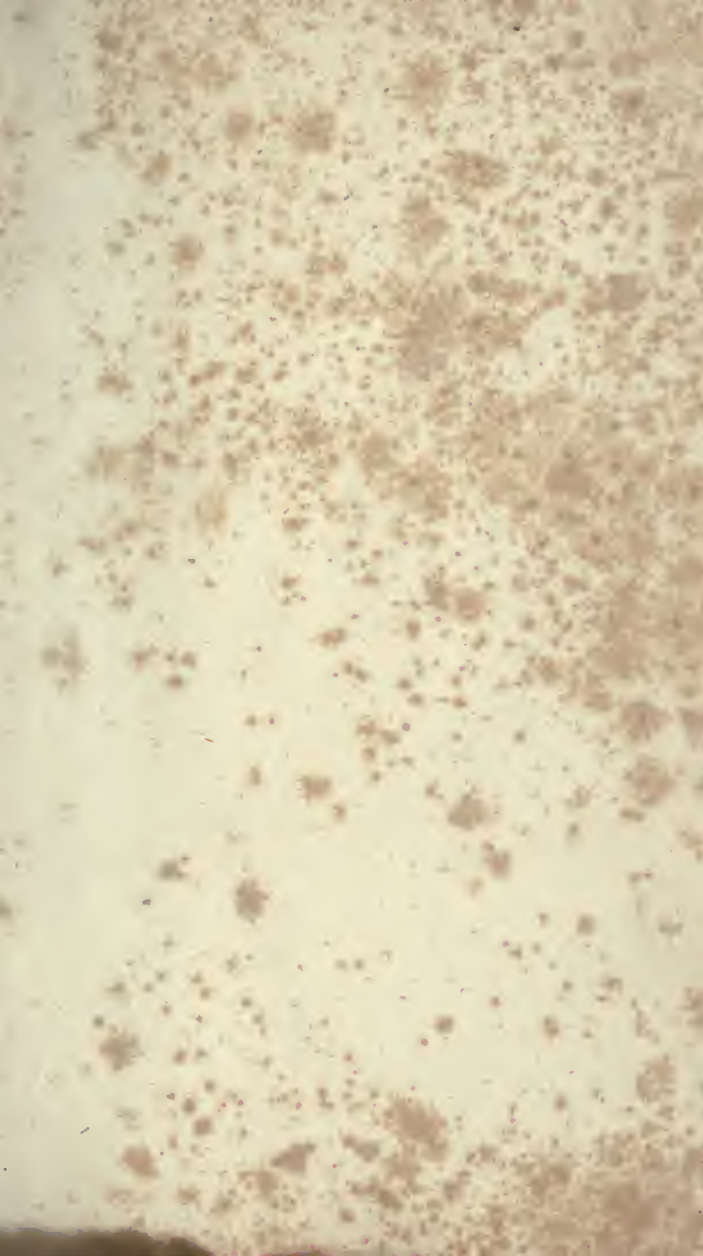
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